LITTLE PEOPLE OF AMERICA (LPA)

Scrap Book

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The lure of the little folk

By R.A. MILTENBERG
Alligator Staff Writer

Have you any inkling as to what an Inkling, let alone a whole society of Inklings, means for America? Do You?!

Relax. They're not your stereotypical alien invaders. And they're not a front for some new terrorist organization either. Still, when one first hears the Inklings are organizing here in Gainesville they might well have been either.

Then the names of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkein are added to their ranks and the mystery clears up.

"YOU SEE, the original Inklings were Oxford scholars who met on Tuesday afternoons at a local pub," explains Dr. Corbin Carnell a leading authority on C.S. Lewis. He has published numerous works on Tolkien, Lewis and their friend Charles Williams.

"There at the Eagle and Child (pub), this group of philosophers, theologians, writers and linguists, would meet for some lunch, beer and discussion of their works in progress."

ON THURSDAY evenings these Inklings would regroup at C.S. Lewis' Oxford apartment to read their works aloud. There, Tolkien himself first read "The Hobbit" and the famous "Lord of the Rings" sequel to his audience of contemporaries.

Says Carnell, "It was Lewis who finally convinced Tolkien to have "The Hobbit" and the Trilogy published."

Surely if we cannot thank Lewis for his own works such as Perelandra, The Narnia series for children, or even the initiation of the Inklings itself, we should be grateful for this act alone.

UNTIL A few years ago American interest in Tolkien's Trilogy and Lewis' fantasy literature largely was underground. Posters, music, and graffitti like "Frodo Lives" and "Asian is Coming," could be found in or around the Head shops in any town. Craft shops appeared, called Rivendell or The White Tree, and coffee houses appeared, called Lothlorien, The Hobbit House, and as in Gainesville: Bilbo and Gandalf's.

The University of Florida was one of the first schools to include a course in these authors when in 1974 the English Department offered the Oxford Mythmakers with its array of topics. The course is taught by Carnell, who observes "This college generation seems starved for mystery. Human beings need more than the flat, secular vision offered by the public schools...To me, it is no wonder that students turn to drugs and Eastern religions."

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So today there are Inklings and the C.S. Lewis Soceities in New York, Portland and Santa Fe, not to mention 26 other groups in California devoted to Tolkien, Lewis and Williams.

FURTHER, a journal called Mythlore is devoted to the work of these three authors. In addition, there is a myth festival every summer (this year the site is Pomona, Italy, and there will also be a C.S. Lewis Weekend in New Haven, Conn. from August 12-14 (just in case you can't make it to Pomona this year).

The influence of these men goes farther into American culture, however, as each year Tolkien calendars are a public favorite. The noted animation artist Ralph Bakshi's "Wizards" was perhaps an experimental prelude to his current preparations for three feature films to be based on Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings." There are even plans for seven one-hour special dramatizing Lewis' "Narnia" books to be televised next year.

For those of you who might be latent Inklings, a local group will explore the possibility of founding a local chapter in Gainesville. According to Carnell, this group would meet monthly to enjoy discussion, dramatic readings, slides and hobbit food. The first meeting is May 23 at 8 p.m. in Little Hall, room 117.

YOU MIGHT NOT see Gandalf there, but Gollum might be hanging around, looking for the ring. Now that might be one "Inkling" to avoid.

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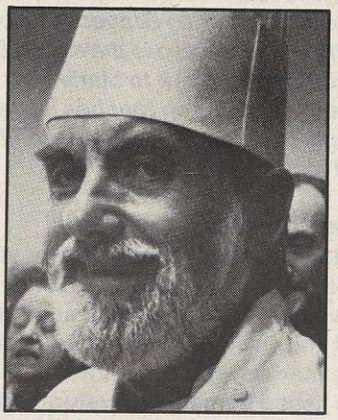

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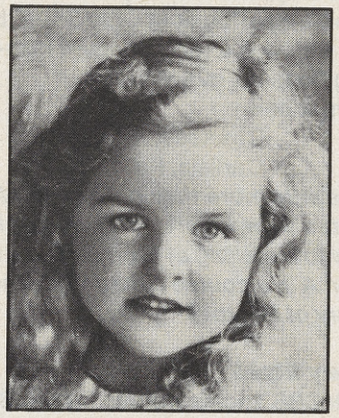

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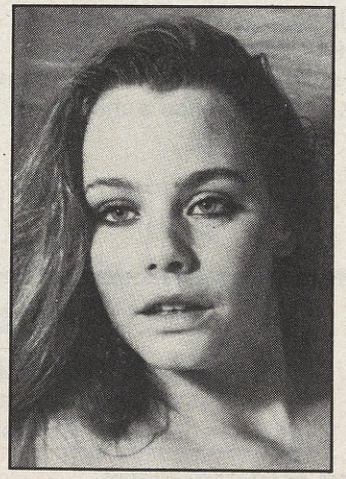

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Cover photograph by Ken Regan/Camera 5

LEE KITCHENS, WHO STANDS TALL IN THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY, SPEAKS UP FOR 'THE LITTLE PEOPLE'

Dwarfs populate folklore, from Santa's workshop to Snow White. *Yet they are rarely encountered in everyday life, although there are some 20,000 dwarfs in the U.S. alone. While their bodies are small, there need be nothing stunted about their minds or achievements, as is demonstrated by Lee Kitchens, 47, the 4′1″ past president of the Little People of America. Founded in 1957, LPA has about 2,500 members. A developmental engineer with Texas Instruments, Kitchens is one of the men credited with designing the first mass-produced transistor radio and was on the team—appropriately—that developed the best-selling miniature calculator, SR-50. Both Kitchens and his 3′11″ wife, Mary, have pilot's licenses, drive Cadillacs and live in a normal-size house in Dallas with two adopted children, son Alan, 21, and daughter Sandy, 17. Lee Kitchens talked with Barney Collier for* PEOPLE *about America's little people and why they organized.*

How do you define a dwarf?

The medical profession generally considers any adult under five feet a dwarf. The Little People of America established 4′10″ as the limit. Most of our members are 2′6″ to 4′6″ tall.

What is the most common type of dwarf?

Some 85 different types of dwarfism have been identified, but the most easily recognized is achondroplasia. It involves shortening of the long bones, wide-spaced eyes, flat bridge of the nose, short fingers and a tendency to overweight.

Does a dwarf differ from a midget?

The type most people refer to as a midget is really a hypopituitary dwarf —we call them "hypopits." They lack a growth hormone created by the pituitary gland. They are perfectly proportioned miniature adults who may mature physically in other respects.

Can dwarfism be corrected?

If the cause is a pituitary deficiency, it can usually be corrected by the injection of a human growth hormone called HGH. The problem is that HGH can only be derived from the pituitary glands of dead people. It takes 200 glands a year to sustain one individual's growth. HGH is also used on burn patients, so there is a shortage.

Are the words "dwarf" and "midget" offensive?

Well, they can be fighting words if used in terms of derision or disrespect. We call ourselves "LPs," for "little people" or "little person."

What do you call your babies?

We call them little-littles.

Do most little people have normal-size parents?

Yes. I did. Most types of dwarfism are genetic accidents that may happen as often as once in 10,000 births. If two little people have children, three out of four of their offspring are likely to be little-littles. When only one parent is a little person, the odds are 50-50.

What is the normal-size parents' reaction to a dwarf child?

There customarily is shock, surprise, anger, rejection, blaming it on the other partner—all of which are absurd. This is something that cannot be controlled by anyone. It just happens.

When did your parents know you were going to be small?

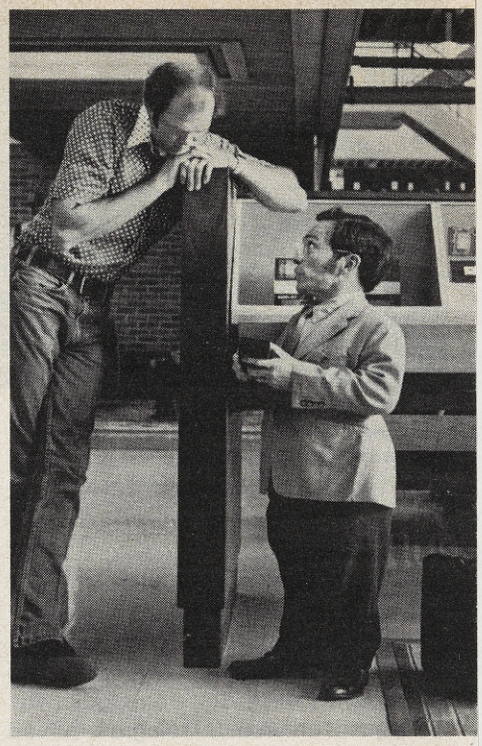
I suspect at birth, but it was confirmed by the Mayo Clinic when I was 16 months old. They advised my mother, "Take him home and treat him like you would any other kid." This is the right advice, though it's difficult to take. I think my parents did pretty well.

Were they overly protective?

No, but they warned me, "Stay out of crowds, because you might get crushed." And I couldn't cross the street as early as other kids, for fear I wouldn't be seen and would get run over.

What physical problems did you have in school?

Not being able to reach the door handle or the telephone or water fountains. The stairs were too high and the hand rail out of reach. The world is designed for normal kids. Still, I managed to go



Electrical engineer Lee Kitchens, who shares six U.S. patents, chats with colleague Stan Moore at Texas Instruments. At right, the 4′1″ Lee casts a Texas-size shadow.

to Texas Christian University and get my electrical engineering degree from Southern Methodist University.

Was driving a car an important symbol?

It was to me, and I know it was to my wife, Mary. It cut the string of total dependence on our parents in getting around and doing things. When I was 21, I had a job and had saved up enough money. My dad was afraid I'd buy a piece of junk. One day out of the clear blue sky he said, "Here, I want you to have a good car." It was just a Ford, but to me it was like a Rolls-Royce!

How did you make the car fit your size?

My dad and a mechanic put in a false floorboard, raised the seat and cut down the steering wheel. A lot was overkill; it made the car impossible for anyone else to drive. My next car was done differently, with extensions on the gas pedal and brake, and a removable seat. Now if my big friends want to take over, I simply move those things out of the way and they can drive.

What are a little person's emotional problems?

To learn to live with the comments people make, like, "Hey, why are you so little?" If you let them get under your skin, you can lead a miserable life.

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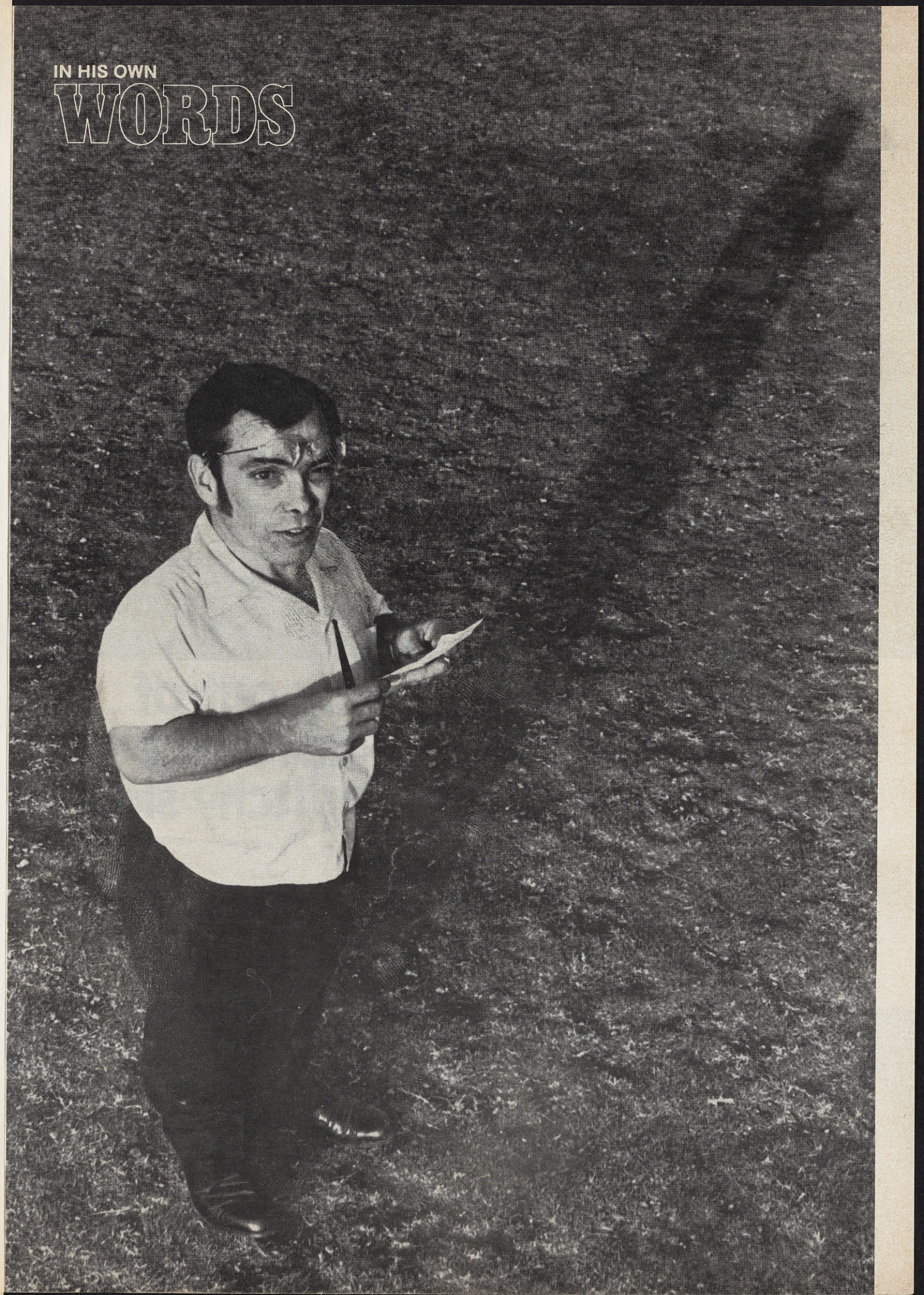
Photographs by Maggi Castelloe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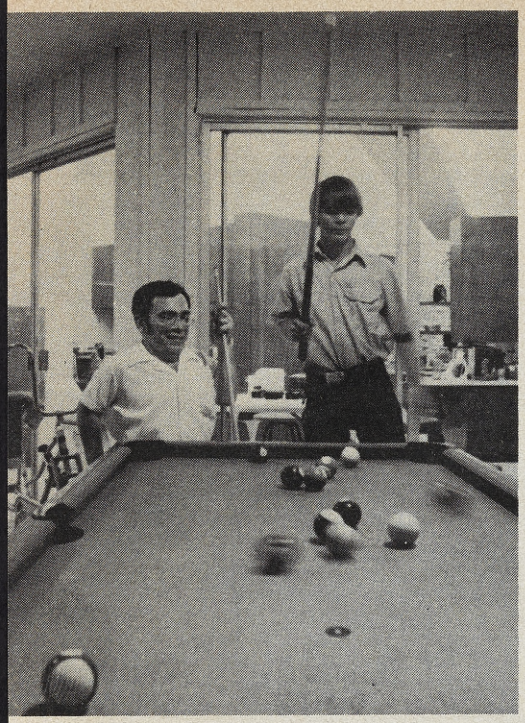

In their Dallas home, Kitchens matches cues with adopted son Alan, 21, thought to be a little person at birth but who grew to 5′7″.

WordsCONTINUED

How do you handle the situation?

You have to expect that children, who are naturally curious, are going to ask questions. A 4-year-old girl came up to Mary one day, touched her and asked, "Are you real, or are you a puppet?" The simplest thing is to answer the question factually.

What is the best way for little people to adjust?

Consultation with another little person who has been through the same thing and has come to grips with it. If you are helping them, it is almost as if you can read their minds. They may harbor a fantasy that one day, through some miracle, all of a sudden they will grow up. If you say, "I used to have that fantasy," it's a shock to them. It may have been one of their innermost secrets which they hadn't shared with anyone.

What is their deepest wish?

A desire for independence. They don't want to depend on other people for transportation or to reach things. That's why driving a car is such a liberator. The little person says, "Hey, I'm behind the wheel like everybody else. Nobody can tell the difference."

Do little people ever deny they're little?

All the time. When I meet one I don't know in the street, he may turn and run. When they see me, it's like seeing themselves in a home movie—seeing themselves as they really are.

How do they like to see themselves?

They feel that everybody accepts them as perfectly normal—which is true to some extent. Your close friends forget your differences. But of course it's not true that everybody looks at you that way. You drive up to a strange filling station and get out of your car, and they're going to *look*. Sooner or later, the pressure gets too great, and then they come round to the Little People of America. They've had enough.

Enough what?

Enough isolation, I guess. Enough lack of information.

Besides counseling and comradeship, what services does the LPA provide?

We try to discover cases of short

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Mary and Lee Kitchens (center left) greet an 18-month-old toddler, youngest of 75 at a Little People of America picnic in Dallas.

WordsCONTINUED

stature in children, some of whom are hidden in back rooms. Parents will deny that their child is different. They live in a fantasy that their child is a slow grower, that everything is going to be all right.

Have you found many such children?

I know of a Long Island lawyer who kept his two kids out of sight until they were 16. They had never been to school. In Minnesota, we found six people who had been institutionalized all their lives, but only one of the six was mentally retarded. There's no way of telling how many people like that are hidden away. We only find out by luck, by accident or by word of mouth.

Do little people often intermarry?

Quite often small couples will latch onto each other because it looks like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. A lot of these couples will make the marriage work, even though they are mismatched.

Do little people ever marry big people?

Yes. We call those "mixed marriages." It has to be tough on the normal-size person because of the stigma society has placed on the little person.

Are many little people successful?

We probably have a disproportionate share of unemployed or underemployed people because isolation and prejudice have denied them an education. You can't get a job until employers are willing to hire handicapped individuals. There was nothing we could do about that until recently. But now, across the board, we have a number of schoolteachers, accountants, business people. I measure anyone who has come up to normal in every respect except size as successful. □

11/27/77

The Palm Beach Post-Times

NOVEMBER 27-DECEMBER 3

The Hobbit

By ALAN JENKINS
Post Staff Writer

It is possible that when NBC airs J. R. R. Tolkien's "The Hobbit" tonight at 8, it will be watched by the most concerned, critical audience ever to assemble before television sets.

Uppermost in many people's minds will be the question: how on earth can commercial television treat the subject of hobbits in general and Bilbo Baggins in particular with anything like taste and sensitivity? Well, if we are to believe the "voice" of Bilbo, Orson Bean, we can all rest easy.

Speaking of the animated film that can be seen on Channels 5 and 7, Bean said it had "been done with tender loving care, in anticipation of the outraged shrieks of 'hobbit' purists. I wouldn't have thought they could accomplish this without sacrificing the Tolkien integrity, but have no fear. They did."

The story is a heartwarming one of good jousting triumphantly over overwhelming odds against the forces of evil as represented by dragons and goblins. The hobbits and dwarves are the good guys with Bilbo being the kind of hero legends are built around.

For a description of a hobbit, we can do no better than hearken to Tolkien's. "They are (or were) a little people, about half our height, and smaller than the bearded dwarves. Hobbits have no beards. There is little or no magic about them, except the ordinary everyday sort which helps them to disappear quietly and quickly when

Hobbit—

large stupid folk like you and me come blundering along, making a noise like elephants which they can hear a mile off.

"They are inclined to be fat in the stomach; they dress in bright colors (chiefly green and yellow); wear no shoes, because their feet grow natural leathery soles and thick warm brown hair like the stuff on their heads (which is curly); have long clever brown fingers, good-natured faces, and laugh deep fruity laughs (especially after dinner, which they have twice a day when they can get it). Now you know enough to go on with."

Arthur Rankin Jr., executive producer of the special, provides some reassurance that all will be as the author detailed. "Tolkien provided excellent physical descriptions of the hobbits, elves and dragons that people his work, and in every instance we have followed his descriptions to the letter — down to the color of the character's beard or belt buckle, the size of his sword, even the laces of his shoes."

As well as following Tolkien's physical descriptions to the last letter, Rankin also vows he "made no changes in the 'Hobbit' story." And writing on behalf of those millions of readers who have felt so much at home in the hobbit kingdom, I can only hope Rankin does not speak with forked tongue.

While it is not the purpose of this column to tell the story of Bilbo's amazing adventure, it will probably be of interest to those not already initiated into the wonders of the Hobbit people, to know that Bilbo had two distinct and contrasting strains in his character.

On his father's side he was a Baggins, "and people considered them very respectable, not only because most of them were rich, but also because they never had any adventures or did anything unexpected: you could tell what a Baggins would say on any question without the bother of asking him."

Thus it is clear that it was certainly not the Baggins in him that Bilbo accept the challenge, albeit with some genuine trepidation, to go "Far over the misty mountains cold/ To dungeons deep and caverns old/ We must away ere break of day/ To seek the pale enchanted gold."

Fortunately for hobbit lovers, Bilbo's mother was Belladonna Took. And although it was not a frequent occurrence, it did happen from time to time that a member of the Took clan would have an adventure, which made other hobbit families opine that one of the Took ancesters must have, at one time, married a fairy. Could there possibly be another explanation?

For more than 50 years the Took side of Bilbo remained dormant, and then. . . .? Again, it would be criminal not to allow Tolkien to describe for us the warring natures alive in Bilbo:

"As they (the dwarves) sang, the hobbit felt the love of beautiful things made by hands and by cunning and by magic moving through him, a fierce and a jealous love, the desire of the hearts of dwarves. Then something Tookish woke up inside him, and he wished to go and see the great mountains, and hear the pine trees and the waterfalls, and explore the caves, and wear a sword instead of a walking-stick. He looked out of the window. The stars were out in a dark sky above the trees. He thought of the jewels of the dwarves shining in dark caverns. Suddenly in the wood beyond The Water a flame leapt up — probably somebody lighting a wood-fire — and he thought of plundering dragons settling on his quiet Hill and kindling it all to flames. He shuddered; and very quickly he was plain Mr. Baggins of Bag-End, Under-Hill, again.

So you see, Bilbo not only triumphed against the forces of evil outside, he also waged a mighty war against the comfortable Baggins side of his temperament.

To give credit where it is due, it must be recognized that not even the most avid Tolkien fan could complain about any lack of adequate preparation for this production, since it has been 10 years in the planning stage. During that time dozens of scripts were written and discarded because, in Rankin's view, they failed to capture the essence of Tolkien's fantasy. Furthermore, it has been two years in actual production, and has involved more than 200 artists.

According to Rankin, other producers have attempted to film "The Hobbit" but gave up "because they could not come to grips with the problem of converting Tolkien's story to a feature film. Some wanted to do it as live action, but where are you going to find live hobbits, elves and dragons?"

Rankin said his production includes "hundreds of thousands of individual drawings," and will be one of the most fully-animated ever filmed, with each frame able to stand as a work of art by itself.

Some of the other voices in the program include: John Huston as Gandalf, the Wizard; Richard Boone as Smaug, the Dragon; Otto Preminger as the Elf King; Cyril Ritchard as Elrond, chief of the elves; Hans Conried as Thorin Oakenshield, leader of the

"He got up trembling. He had less than half a mind to fetch the lamp, and more than half a mind to pretend to, and go and hide behind the beer-barrels in the cellar, and not come out again until all the dwarves had gone away. . ."

Orson Bean speaks for Bilbo Baggins, principal character in 'The Hobbit,' the animated special to be shown on Channels 5 and 7 tonight at 8.

dwarves; and Brother Theodore, the night club monologist, as Gollum, the "creature of darkness."

Rankin claims that due to the detailed descriptions it was easy to find the right voices for the characters. "I cannot think of a better hobbit, for example, than Orson Bean or anyone who can 'smile' like a dragon better than Richard Boone."

The magic that engulfs the reader as he gets deeper into "The Hobbit" was felt by the "voices" and their families. "When Boone told his teenage son he was doing Smaug," Rankin said, "the son cautioned him, 'Dad, are you sure you can handle this? Please don't louse it up.' "

Of course, the best thing that could happen as a consequence of NBC's presentation is that many more people will go to the bookstore and buy the book, and others by the same author.

When "The Hobbit" first appeared, a "Tolkien Society of America" quickly followed, and that has grown into The Mythopoeic Society, which is devoted to studying the works of Tolkien and other popular writers of fantasy. Also, there have been hobbit picnics, with Tolkien fans dressed as characters from his books feasting on mushrooms and cider, the staple hobbit diet.

But enough is enough. For the present let it suffice that we tune into Channel 5 at 8 p.m. and for once enjoy a real adventure — one sublimely suitable for all the family.

December 12, 1977, Monday, Final Edition

SECTION: Style; B1

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HEADLINE: A Small Holiday Gathering: Coping With Life's Unique Challenges; How 'Little People' Cope With Life's Unique Challenges

BYLINE: By Judy Bachrach

BODY:

"I want you to write it up as the best party of the year," said Ed Egan only half-jokingly. "I want everyone to feel bad for not being here."

Yesterday, Ed and Mary Louise Egan threw what might be called a semi-exclusive Christmas party at their Silver Spring home - that could be epitomized by the first Santa Claus to arrive and regale the adults and children there. In the end there would be two Santas to do just that, but the first was 50 inches tall. And that was not at all unusual yesterday.

The hosts - like the second Santa - are of average height, but many of the invited yesterday happen to be members of the Little People of America (LPA), an organization founded in the late '50s by actor Billy Barty to find "solutions to the unique challenges of little people."

And it isn't always easy being very, very small. It means a lifetime of accommodations. Of buying clothes and then having to make severe alterations, as many of the guests yesterday said they have to do. Of finding jobs that don't discriminate.

"Like," explained Ed Egan, "like a dwarf cannot punch Floor 19 on an elevator." Ed Egan knows about these problems. He has seven children of average height, but his 10-year-old daughter, Cara, is a dwarf.

LPA, however, is primarily a social organization, (although it does have an adoption committee for what it calls "Little Littles"), which admits as members people 4 feet 10 and under. In fact there was a brief meeting of the local membership at the party, co-chaired by chapter president Charles Eyler and district director Ruth Williams.

"Any of you girls and fellas want to go to Hollywood?" asked Ruth Williams, as she looked around the living room. "I received a communication from the producer of the movie 'Tom Thumb.' And they're looking for a young man. He shouldn't be any taller than 30 inches."

The membership looked around, and shrugged. Thirty inches is hard to come by. "Although," said Robin Zeltner who is 3 feet 7, "Although I do know a guy in another district who's 2 feet 7 inches. And he's a bouncer in a bar."

Like a lot of the members, Zeltner prefers the term "little person" to dwarf or midget (which are themselves two different states of being. A midget is also small - but proportional. And Dr. Madeleine Harbison, a geneticist who also was there, says the midgets can grow into their 40s - while dwarfs stop growing when average people stop).

Asked if little people mind when average-sizers bend down to talk to them, Zeltner shook her head. "My philosophy about that is that it's the way people do it, and not what they do. My mother calls me 'Peanut,' and I don't mind. My parents always had their heads on straight, and so I do too. But a lot of little people can't deal with it."

There was, for instance, a time when Zeltner couldn't deal with iot either - when she was young. "I never would admit it. I'd always say I'm just like everyone else. Adolescence - especially adolescence - that's the worst period

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for a little person. I didn't mix as well as I should have. In high school it was very difficult to have my own peer group. I'd find myself hanging out with all my parents' friends."

Zeltner is now 24 and a legislative assistant on the Hill, but 11 years ago, when she first joined the LPA, she had never seen another little person before.

"I went to a short stature symposium (at Johns Hopkins) and for the first time I was a part of things instead of being set apart! I could see people eye-to-eye - it really was an incredible thing!"

"I tell you," she said, smiling, "Now that I'm grown up, it really doesn't matter any more. I do have my own peer group. I used to be very pushy - I guess that was it. I used to have a feeling that I had to push my way in to be accepted. But now I don't even think I'm handicapped."

No one there seemed to feel particularly handicapped. Charles Eyler is an accountant for an insurance company in Hagerstown. "I'm 4 feet 6 inches," he began.

"Bragger," snorted Ruth Williams. Unlike Eyler who married another little person whom he met at an LPA reunion, Ruth Williams is married to a man who is 5 feet 9 inches. Asked how they manage to kiss, she replied, "Where there's a will there's a way to everything. And I'm not clarifying that."

Not every short person there was a dwarf or a midget. Lynn Park, who works on the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, is 4 feet 6 as a result of the congenital disease, osteogenesis imperfecta, and she's in a wheelchair, although she is walking more and more lately.

"For me, shortness was as much of a hassle as being in a wheelchair," she said. "There was more subjective plan from being small. Partly from being disproportional. Ego. I don't know. The longing we all have to be lithe, and skinny and tall. Est has helped me a lot to come to terms with myself."

She laughed easily, then said, "You know, in this society it's okay if you go off the norm, but only if you do it graciously . . . I think those teen-age years should be outlawed."

At this, Robin Zeltner nodded her head vigorously. "Oh Yeah."

"I'll take today instead of yesterday," Park continued, "yesterday instead of last year."

"Everyone," Zeltner concurred, "Everyone always says they'd like to be 16 again. For me - no way."

It was Park's turn to nod. "You'd have to pull me kicking and screaming into the past."

GRAPHIC: Picture, Host Ed Egan greets Rosemary Sangeleer and her daughter Paula, 8. By Harry Naltchayan - The Washington Post

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American Medical News, June 1978

Small in a tall world

The Author: Lynn Lamberg is a free-lance writer, based in Washington, D.C.

by LYNN LAMBERG

Randy Newman's recent pop tune "Short People," with lyrics that dwell on "grubby little fingers and dirty little minds," brought a seldom-discussed prejudice into public awareness.

In a world where "bigger" often is equated with "better," short-statured persons have been disadvantaged by societal attitudes as well as their own lack of height. Many have felt looked down upon, figuratively as well as literally. Hence an important aim of treatment is to ensure that stunted physical growth doesn't result in a stunted personality as well.

The prevalence of short stature isn't well documented. There may be 100,000 to 400,000 persons in the United States with actual or expected adult height of four feet 10 inches or under, states Victor McKusick, MD, director of the department of medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Md., and a world authority on genetic disorders.

More than 100 types of dwarfism have been identified, although, as Edmond Murphy, MD, chief of the division of medical genetics, Joseph Earle Moore Clinic, Johns Hopkins, noted, "We're always up against the dilemma, is this person's diagnosis different from that one's, or is it atypical?"

Diagnostic features are clear at birth primarily in disproportionate dwarfism, where there's a disparity between trunk and limbs, but frequently short stature does not become apparent until later, with a child's delayed arrival at developmental milestones.

Causes of short stature include disorders of the pituitary and endocrine glands, defects in the way bone or cartilage cells function, and malnutrition. Even lack of parental love can cause shortness. Bone disorders account for 70% of the cases. Complications and appropriate treatment vary considerably.

The emphasis today is on early diagnosis. "Early intervention could make a significant difference in thyroid or pituitary deficiency," says Dr. Murphy. In other cases, early treatment can minimize or eliminate bone deformity and thus prevent disability.

He adds, "Early diagnosis means that genetic counseling can be available if it's going to be of any use to parents contemplating future children. Where the condition represents a new mutation as occurs commonly in achondroplasia, parents can be assured that there's only one instance in the world literature of parents of average height having two children with achondroplasia. Additionally, knowing that, for example, achondroplasts are subject to ear infections can help alert parents to seek early treatment to prevent deafness."

Early counseling of parents also can help minimize psychologic stress in the child and in the family. "The determining factor in the social successes of the dwarfed child is the attitude of the parents towards their child's growth problem," observes Joan Weiss, a Hopkins clinical social worker. "Much depends on the sensitivity and forthrightness of the pediatrician," she adds.

Integrating the medical and social aspects of short stature involves a multidisciplinary approach. At Hopkins, where one important goal is to help short-statured persons and their families realize that they are not alone with their difficulties and share solutions to common problems, the genetics division annually sponsors a symposium that brings medical professionals together with short-statured persons, their parents and brothers and sisters for a series of workshops on a wide range of topics. This year's program was scheduled for June 16-17.

One thread that ties the workshops together is short-statured persons' need to be treated according to their age, not their size.

It's hard for adults, and far harder for [illegible] and costly to be [illegible] appeal."

"Medical problems of short stature are far from being satisfactorily resolved," notes Dr. Murphy of Johns Hopkins. "Lacking a magic wand to cure the problems, we try to ease distress. Because some disorders are extremely rare, we feel there's a strong rationale for getting patients seen periodically in a medical center where the staff has expertise in dealing with complications."

Areas of Complications

One area with differing approaches to treatment involves when to use braces to manage back problems in achondroplasia. Arthur Siebens, MD, chairman of rehabilitation medicine at Hopkins-affiliated Good Samaritan Hospital, works on the assumption that abnormal curvature of the spine is preventable and that, since the curvature compounds spinal stenosis and is the basis of back pain, these problems in turn are preventable if treated as soon as the spine begins to bear weight. That's the time when the child starts sitting, since proportionately, achondroplasts' heads are larger and heavier than average.

Notes Dr. Siebens, "We believe in bracing the back to help straighten and strengthen the trunk when it is under stress; that is, during most of the waking hours." Braces made of canvas and a thermoplastic material are individually constructed for each child.

A differing opinion is expressed by Steven Kopits, MD, a Hopkins orthopedic surgeon who limits his practice to problems of short stature. Notes Dr. Kopits, "There's no established natural history for the development of swayback in achondroplasia; swayback is just one factor in the development of a tight spinal canal. While perhaps 60% of achondroplasts develop spinal stenosis, most aren't seriously hindered." Dr. Kopits believes only those achondroplasts who show a tendency toward swayback need bracing.

In the dental area, Hopkins faculty member L. Stefan Levin, DDS, points out that conditions range from completely normal to unusually shaped or congenitally absent teeth. He says that achondroplasts can be expected to have a severe bite deformity and should be taken to an orthodontist at age seven or eight because braces may be appropriate earlier than in average-statured children.

Despite their considerable problems, many short-statured adults do, of course, "make it" in the larger world. It's no surprise to find that the motto of Little People of America is "Think big!"

How one family copes with achondroplasia

Betty Elder, liaison assistant for short stature at the Johns Hopkins division of medical genetics, reports she sometimes establishes rapport with new families by saying, "I understand how you feel. My 10-year-old son is an achondroplastic dwarf."

The son, Charles, is now three feet, two inches tall, with an estimated adult height of four feet, two inches.

When he was born, he was identified as having hydrocephalus. At three months he was operated on for a subdural hematoma. "The doctors first thought he'd be blind, deaf, retarded, and unable to walk, so the fact that he was going to be short was the least of our concerns," says Mrs. Elder. To date, Charles has had six brain procedures.

Despite physical impairments that include constrictions in his elbows, bow legs, a floating left eye and limited dexterity, Charles keeps up scholastically with his classmates in the fourth grade of a regular Baltimore County public school.

The Elders keep a duplicate set of schoolbooks at home so that he doesn't have to tote a heavy load back and

Small in a Tall World

Continued from Impact/5

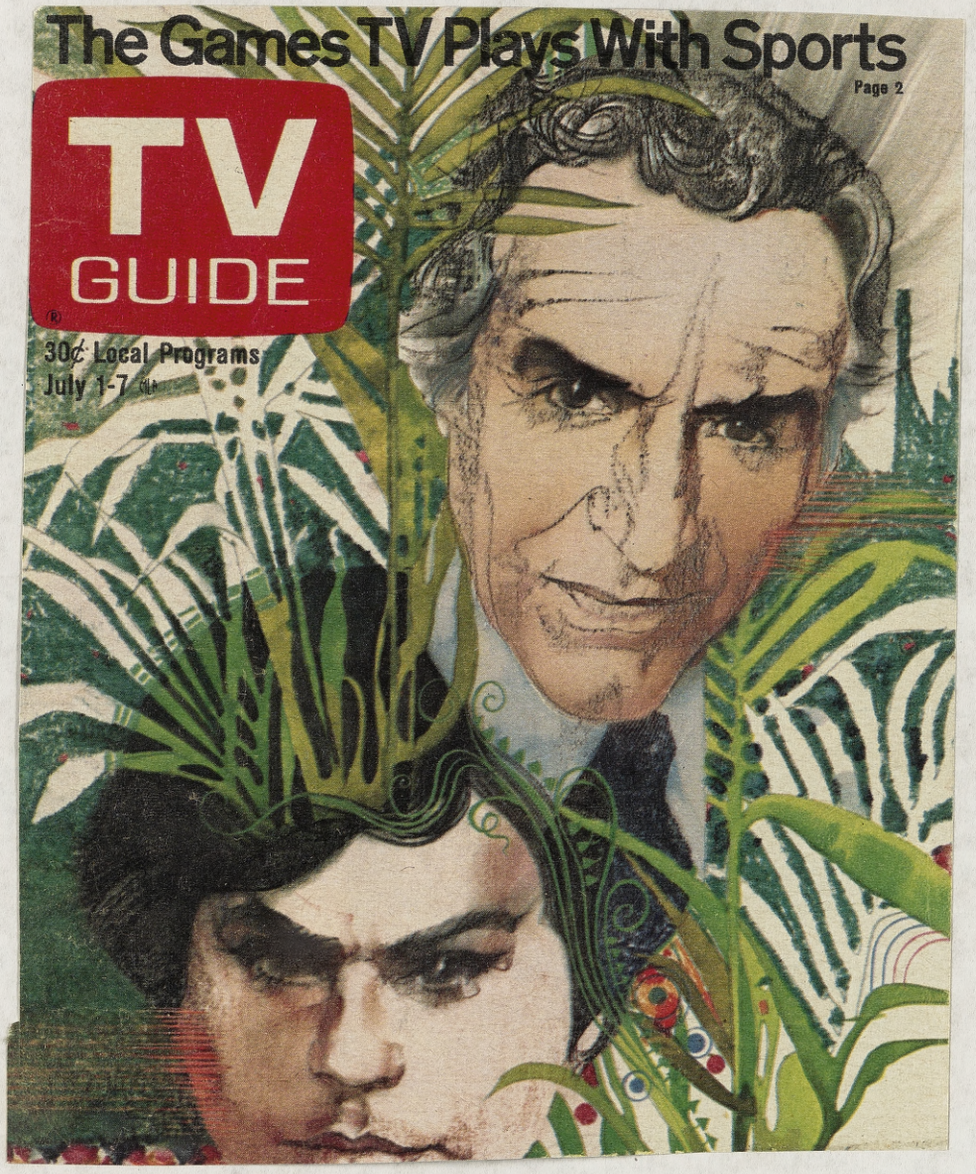
market, a handicapped person has to be better qualified to get the job. For most short-statured persons, the hard part is to get the job, not to keep the job."

George Baehm, national employment chairman of the Little People of America, and himself four feet tall and a salesman for his family-owned container company, reports that of the 3,000 members of LPA, fewer than 1% are in show business. The three major occupations of LPA members are accounting, secretarial work, and schoolteaching. Relatively few are employed in jobs where small size is an advantage, such as airplane riveting.

Short-statured persons are ineligible for jobs with a height requirement, such as police or fire work. They aren't realistic if they apply for jobs that require heavy physical labor.

Short-statured persons whose limbs are disproportionately small in reference to their trunk may have problems in self-care; that is, the management of such tasks of daily living as bathing or getting dressed. A wide variety of helpful devices have been developed; among them, a sock stretcher for persons who can't reach their feet, sponges on sticks for bathing, pedal blocks to modify ordinary automobiles, wands for pushing elevator buttons, pincers for inserting money into pay phones and for reaching high items on grocery shelves. Some short-statured homeowners have built scaled-down kitchens and bathrooms and lowered their lightswitches, doorknobs, and furniture.

The difficulty of finding appropriately styled small-sized clothing drives many short-statured persons to the sewing machine; persons who aren't normally proportioned usually can't even wear regular children's sizes. Shoes often have to be individually made. Observes Grace Oliver, a 21-year-old who is two feet, 10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July 1-7

'It's very tiring looking up all the time'

At 3-feet-11, Herve Villechaize has to battle to succeed as an actor and human being

By John M. Wilson

Most of us have grown up seeing midgets, dwarfs and other small people portrayed as freaks. We need to be reminded from time to time that they are just like us—only miniatures.

At 3-feet-11 and 73 slightly chubby pounds, Herve Villechaize is one of the great reminders.

He's the costar, with Ricardo Montalban, of *Fantasy Island*, ABC's new Saturday-night hit. To begin with, there is some question as to whether Herve is a midget or a dwarf. The term midget signifies a person who is very small (roughly 4-feet-11 or less), but normally proportioned. A dwarf, also tiny, is usually distinguished by a disproportionately large torso and head, and short arms and legs. Herve claims to be a midget, but admits that his birth certificate lists him as a dwarf. An outside opinion was sought, and Billy Barty, perhaps the world's most famous dwarf and one who prefers the →

continued

term *little person*, said, "Oh, don't let him kid you. He's a dwarf."

Herve isn't all that concerned. "I don't care what they call me," he said, "as long as it's said with respect."

These days Villechaize is getting plenty of respect, along with boxfuls of fan mail. On the show, Montalban plays the dignified Mr. Roarke, creator of illusions, and Villechaize his mischievous sidekick, Tattoo, who is forever ogling pretty girls. They oversee a lush tropical paradise where citizens of a more mundane world drop by to live out cherished fantasies.

Many critics find the show itself hopelessly mundane, but with its high ratings, Montalban and Villechaize have become TV's most popular odd couple. "We're like an old couple living together," said Villechaize of Mr. Roarke and Tattoo. "We bicker a lot, but we love each other." Their roles, it turns out, have some basis in reality. Villechaize considers himself a free spirit, a Bohemian painter-turned-actor with an eye for female beauty, who has to check himself around the more proper Montalban. "He's very straight," Villechaize said, his thick French accent compounded by a slight lisp, "and I'm completely cuckoo."

Indeed, there have been reports that Herve's liberal use of four-letter words and freewheeling manner have caused the graying Latin actor to raise his eyebrows, but Montalban said they are "quite fond of each other." His main problem, he said, has been relating to Herve on-camera as the scripts require. "I was hesitant in the beginning to show annoyance, because he's so small. I was afraid the public might find it *cruel*. But as I have grown to know and respect him, I no longer think of him as little at all."

At 35, Herve Villechaize (pronounced *Er-vay Veal-luh-shez*) is a cherubic, Pillsbury-doughboy kind of figure, with a thatch of thick, black hair and mischievous dark eyes under sleepy lids. He has an easily tickled sense of humor, but he can be something of a terror with his temper.

"I am very independent," he said, sitting in his personal trailer and smoking a small cigar. "Anything that infringes on my freedom makes me very mad." He poured some wine and mentioned that he got the trailer only after becoming ill from wet weather, and taking refuge in Montalban's. He also has his own personal driver. "Next year I'll ask for an airplane."

Villechaize can be as pompous as The Little King, and those on the *Fantasy Island* set have learned to cater to him when he's in a petulant mood. But much of the act is motivated by survival, the fight for what is rightfully his. And he knows how to put up a fight, at least according to his own startling confession.

"I was arrested for terrorizing Troy Donahue," he said.

Troy Donahue—the tall, blond, pretty-boy movie star of the 1960s? "That's right," Herve said with a bit of pride. Herve claimed that he and Donahue argued some years ago when Villechaize felt he had been cheated out of the rights to a movie idea he had written, for a film in which Donahue had starred. "I just went berserk," Herve said. He broke a window in Donahue's apartment, then began smashing his dishes, until Donahue tossed him out the door. "I was outside trying to get in by the window when the cops came." The movie was never released, but Herve was—with the charges dropped, and a financial settlement for his story in his pocket. That, in any case, is the way Villechaize tells the story. Donahue says it never happened and that his relationship with Herve had always been a good one.

Herve's agent, Arnold Rifkin, takes special care to send his client on interviews only if the elevators are equipped with buttons he can reach. And appointments after dark are ruled out. "I'm asking for a bodyguard now," Rifkin said. "The crowds are beginning to mob him. People accost him and don't realize they can hurt him."

Attacking dogs are also dangerous. In supermarkets Herve sometimes has to climb the shelves to reach a highly placed can. And, he says, "It's very tiring looking up all the time." But in general he makes few concessions to his size. He lives in a normal-sized house with normal-sized furnishings. "People always think that if you're a midget, you know all the other midgets in town. I don't, so why should my big friends be uncomfortable? Yeah, I'm handicapped, but I don't feel it's a big hassle. Nothing in my life do I let be a big wall. If I see a wall, I push it down."

Villechaize was born into a normal-sized family, with three brothers, in Paris in 1943, and contends that his size was less an obstacle than his alienation in a "bourgeois" family. His French father was a surgeon, his English mother "an artist at heart. But in my family, artists were bums."

He was graduated at 16 from a prestigious art academy, and emigrated to New York for further study. He taught himself English by watching TV Westerns, then began acting in 1968, getting a few minor roles on Broadway and off. While in New York, he also met and married another artist, a full-sized, attractive brunette, but they are now divorcing after eight years.

After appearing in several undistinguished feature films, he was cast in the 1974 James Bond caper, "The Man with the Golden Gun." "The One and Only" followed last winter. In 1977, when producers Aaron Spelling and Leonard Goldberg were working on *Fantasy Island*, they disagreed with the network's idea of casting an attractive female sidekick for Montalban. The producers came up with the idea of a little person, and after seeing "The Man with the Golden Gun," they signed Villechaize immediately.

Villechaize doesn't want to remain marooned on TV, and actively socializes with film writers and directors, encouraging them to create a worthwhile role for a little person.

"Mostly, they think we're dumb," he says. "Most of the scripts I get make us do stupid things. If they write us love scenes, 19 out of 20 times I'm going to be under the covers with a tall girl . . . it's not going to be love-making the regular way, it's not going to be tender. They're going to make it look dirty.

"I joke about sex. I have a very healthy sex life. But they don't relate to that. If a girl goes out with me, they treat her like a tramp. Just because my wife was married to me, she had to take such abuse, you wouldn't believe it. And that didn't help the marriage, let me tell you."

Because of his size, he has been denied housing and refused job interviews at ad agencies, even with a full art portfolio. "But what am I going to do? Get a gun and shoot them? There is a way to change people. That's how I'm using the media. I want people to know that I'm just like them, with my weaknesses and my strengths, my ups and downs."

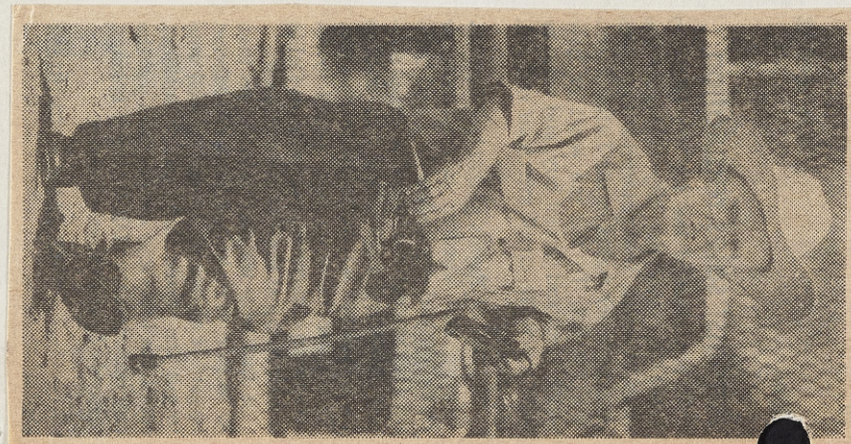
The afternoon was waning, and Herve had to be back on the set. As he put on his coat, the head of a pretty blonde actress appeared outside a window. Herve leaned out and asked, "You want to go to school?" She was confused, and he pointed to a sign on his trailer door: Sex Instructor—First Lesson Free. "The teacher is in," he said. Flustered, she hurried away.

"I make her blush," Herve squealed, digging his chubby fists into his cheeks, and almost choking on his laughter. "I love it. I love it!"

The Terror of Fantasy Island. (END)

Little people's day at the ballpark

Short People 'think big' at their convention



— Staff photos by Paul Iverson

The Little People Association National Convention took to the ball field in Irving Tuesday, with teams competing for the convention championship. In the top photo, the women participated in their own contest between the East and West. A member of the East team (bottom photo) cracks one to the outfield. Burre Billingsley decided to take photographs of the game instead of participating. More than 100 persons are attending the convention, based at the Le Baron Hotel. The convention continues through Thursday with a bowling tournament, talent show and banquet. A workshop on special problems for little people also will be held Thursday at the hotel.

DALLAS TIMES HERALD
Wednesday, July 26, 1978 · · · · ·

METRO

Editorials

LITTLE PEOPLE'S BASEBALL ACTION — The Little People National Convention took to the ball field Tuesday, with teams competing for the convention championship. Roscoe Stidman of Fort Worth, assistant athletic director for the group, (upper left) keeps score in the contest between the East and West.

A member of the West team shows excitement as he scores (upper right), while Bobby Van Etten, official organizational photographer captures the action on film (below). The convention, based at the Le Baron Hotel, continues through Thursday with a bowling tournament, talent show and banquet.

DALLAS TIMES HERALD

Wednesday, July 26, 1978

Staff Photo by Meg McKinney

Carol Phillips discos at the Little People Convention while a Snoopy pinata hangs in background and the 'little littles' watch attentively

DALLAS TIMES HERALD
Thursday, July 27, 1978
LIVING
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Enthusiasm is big for little ones

BY MARCIA SMITH-DURK
Staff Writer

The singers, dancers and comedians on stage at the Le Baron Hotel Wednesday night may have been short of stature, but in no way were they short of enthusiasm as they entertained some 500 conventioneers who applauded the performers' efforts all the way.

The annual talent show, performed by and for those attending the Little People of America convention, featured 24 performers, none of whom were more than 4 feet 10 inches tall. And though the acts were uneven in quality — as both amateurs and professionals alike appeared on the stage — the audience responded with equal fervor.

"The talent show is an opportunity for the little people to break out of their shells. They can get up there and perform and get laughed at (by other little people) and feel as though they are on equal ground," said Lee Kitchens, convention chairman and former president of LPA.

LPA, a national club for little people, or dwarfs, is open to people who are less than 4 feet 10 inches tall. The club, founded by actor Billy Barty, was formed to give little people an opportunity to meet other little people in the country. The club's motto is Think Big!

The 20th annual convention of LPA (the first in Dallas) is the largest ever, Kitchens said. Approximately 533 people from 37 states, Canada and El Salvador were registered for the six-day convention. The little people attending the convention ranged in age from nine months to 80 years, and in size, from 34 inches to 4 feet 10 inches.

The talent show was one of many events scheduled for the entertainment and edification of the little people: sporting events, workshops, dances, dinners, a fashion show and general assemblies were also on the agenda.

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At least 500 people (including both little people and their families) crowded into the Parliament Room at the Le Baron to see the Wednesday night show. Like any convention, there was a lot of reminiscing about past conventions, picture-taking and greeting of old friends and new before the performers took the stage.

The show opened with a young woman who disco-ed to the BeeGee's "More Than A Woman" from "Saturday Night Fever." Several musical acts followed.

The songs all seemed to have special significance to the people performing them, whether the song was "Thank You for Being a Friend" or "I'm Little But I'm Loud."

A middle-aged couple, both little, demonstrated the crowd's ability to laugh at their size. "We're ankle deep in little littles tonight" brought a big laugh from the crowd. Another act featured the song "Hello Biggie," an answer to Randy Newman's "Short People."

To the tune of "Hello, Dolly," they sang:

"Well, hello, biggie.
"Well, hello, biggie,
"We hope you bump your head
"Walking through the door."

Most of the little people in LPA were able to accept Randy Newman's hit song "Short People" with good humor, Kitchens said. "The ones that reacted most strongly to the song were about 5 feet tall. We little people took the time to listen to the words and realize they were talking about small-minded people," he said.

That didn't keep the conventioneers from enjoying "Hello Biggie," "Tall People" and any barbs aimed at the Newman hit.

One of the stars of the show, Michael Lee Gogin, a professional musician from Los Angeles who will appear in the movie "The Lord of the Rings," which also features Billy Barty, was particularly incensed by "Short People."

"Musically, the song's not that good. And I don't care what the writer's intentions were, the song clearly pointed to the physical. It's stupid. And it's dumb of the record company to want to play off that and hurt people," he said.

Yet, Gogin said the song wasn't a big issue at this year's convention. "It hasn't been a topic of conversation, thank God. It's been swept under the carpet."

the little sentinel

Volume 5, No. 2, Sunday, January 6, 1980 A section of the Sentinel Star

Little People of America to have regional meeting

A regional meeting of The Little People of America will be held Friday through Sunday at Good Samaritan Hospital in West Palm Beach with Dr. Jamie Frias discussing the problems of dwarfed persons.

The medical clinic is the first to be sponsored by District 4, which includes the southeastern states, of the organization. In addition to Frias, who is on the staff at the University of Florida Medical School, speakers will include Dr. Steven Kopits, Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore.

Little People of America is a national organization, and the conference in West Palm Beach is open to any person under 4 feet 10 inches in height.

Lou Scharrer, 5135 Hoperita St., Orlando, is president of the Central Florida group. Information about the clinic may be obtained from Scharrer.

Their stature can't be measured

'The public is becoming educated about us, & our own are learning more about themselves. It's most encouraging.'

James McGrath/Daily News
George Baehm 3d may be only 4 feet tall but that does not prevent him and wife, Christine, from leading a full-sized life at their Rockaway Point home.

DAILY NEWS, SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 1980

By WILLIAM NEUGEBAUER

THIS SUMMER, A SMALL army of small people, including some from Brooklyn, Queens and Long Island, will rendezvous on the West Coast to map new tactics in a common effort to survive and prosper in an oversized society.

The conclave, set for July 21 through 25 at the Pacifica Hotel in Los Angeles, is the annual meeting of the Little People of America, a national organization of some 4,000 midgets and dwarfs that is growing vocally and in numbers to gain recognition for its members and to spur action in coping with job bias, social ostracism and out-of-reach public accommodations. They also meet to have fun, and many romances that bloomed at these gatherings have resulted in happy marriages.

"We're the happy little people, and our members must be no taller than 4-feet-10," said George Baehm 3d, the group's national vice president, who is exactly 4 feet high. "Of course, there are people of short stature who seem to cling to their painful problems, but you'll not find any sour faces among us. It's unfortunate, but a number of disturbed little people just appear to remain hiding in closets."

Pleasure and business

The joyful atmosphere of the five-day meeting is punctuated by serious business,replete with conferences and workshops focusing on employment, job discrimination, education, clothing, medical assistance, parental and family problems and a host of other concerns that beset and frequently infuriate diminutive persons.

"We explain to our little people in precise terms what must be done in certain matters, how to solve their problems and live happy lives among normal-sized people," Baehm explained. "Doctors will attend our conferences and tell us how we can help remedy such physical ailments as arthritis and back pains. Our education committee will consider new applicants for various study programs, and we'll also look into increasing employment opportunities."

Baehm pointed out that their short stature often precludes little people from jobs they are eminently capable of holding, although federal antidiscrimination statutes, including those affecting wheelchair cases and the war-wounded, have somewhat eased that problem.

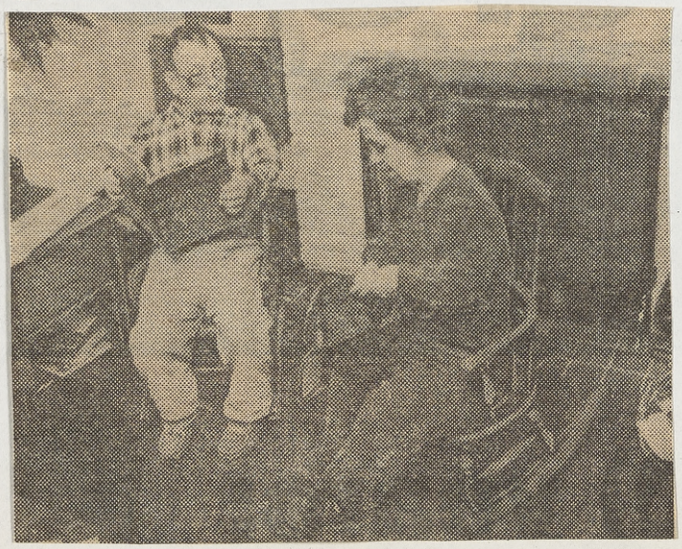
"Sometimes," Baehm advised, "employers are afraid little people might be hurt on the job, or that they might not do the job to his liking. But our little people do not seek positions they cannot handle."

Greater job opportunities

Times were when midgets and dwarfs found work predominantly in show business—in movies, side shows and cir-

(Continued on page 7)

Persons 4-feet-10 and under who wish to join the Little People of America may write to the organization's national office at Box 126, Owatonna, Minn. 55060.



These little people are standing proud

(Continued from page 2)

cuses—but greater educational self-help has vastly broadened the occupational horizons for the small set.

"No more!" Baehm thundered. "A lot of those performers are now going hungry. But look at our roster. We have a physician in Brooklyn. A chemist in New Jersey. We have speech therapists, hundreds of sales people, insurance agents, teachers, nurses, you name it. We helped put one of our persons through law school in Texas, and we've just contributed money to another one going to law school at the University of Pennsylvania. We scrutinize the applicant, determine the educational needs and help him or her as best we can without draining our financial resources."

Baehm said the group has about 30 members from Brooklyn and 25 from Queens and Long Island. It was organized in 1957 by 45-inch Billy Barty, a TV and motion picture entertainer, to educate both the public and little people and make the latter's life more enjoyable. It has 28 chapters coast to coast.

"We're getting more members every year, about a 20% annual growth," Baehm said. "The public is becoming more educated about us, and our own people are learning more about themselves. It's most encouraging."

Acceptance a problem

He estimated there are between 15,000 and 20,000 midgets and dwarfs throughout the country.

Social acceptance in a normal-sized world still ranks high among problems affecting small people, Baehm said, but better jobs with better pay and greater exposure to life opportunities narrows the difficulty.

"Look at it this way," Baehm said. "If a person my size pulled up at a gas station in a Cadillac, chances are people there would be less apt to look at him curiously, rather than if he pulled up in a jalopy. It's a question of wherewithal, a matter of perspective."

Baehm noted, incidentally, that some 90% of the members in his group drive their own cars with special pedal adjustments.

"We find that that first step on a bus is very difficult to climb," he explained.

Two categories

Little people prefer being called just that, although they generally fall into two categories: Disproportionate dwarfs have normal heads and trunks but short limbs. Proportionate dwarfs, commonly called midgets, appear as miniatures of normal-sized people. What they lack in stature they often compensate for in brainpower.

"We may be small but we're certainly not dumb," is the way Baehm puts it.

Medical authorities said there are some 70 possible causes of dwarfism, including bone disease, hormonal failure and defective genes, and that not all types are inherited.

In fact, some 2,000 midget children injected with Human Growth Hormone, better known as HGH, have been able to grow as tall as 5 foot 4 inches. Their short stature is due to an underactive pituitary, a pea-sized gland located beneath the base of the brain. Adult dwarfs, because they have reached maturity, cannot be treated.

His group, Baehm said, maintains liaisons with the Moore Clinic at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, the nation's leading dwarfism research center, where it will sponsor a short-stature symposium this June, and with the Human Growth Foundation in Plainview, L.I.

Met wife at meeting

Baehm, who is 47 and secretary and sales chief of a family-owned paper container company in Manhattan, has special affection for the group's annual meetings. He met his 3-foot-11 wife during the 1962 meeting at Ashville, N. C. They were married the following year in a well-attended ceremony at the Little Neck Community Church in Queens, where Baehm now serves on the 12-member parish council.

The event made the newspapers and Baehm volunteered, "You might call this a Tom Thumb wedding," before driving his bride in a specially built sedan on a honeymoon trip to New England.

"Yes, it was love at first sight," his wife, the former Christine Anderson of Virginia, Minn., said demurely.

The Baehms, childless by choice, mention the work of the group's adoption committee, which involves itself with various community agencies in placing dwarf children of normal-sized parents with short-stature couples.

Baehm said some little people are married to normal-sized persons, "but you'll find that usually occurred before the shorter partner came into this organization." He said that about 80% of the group's married folks met through the organization.

At their home at Rockaway Point, the Baehms furnished their bedroom and kitchen to account for their size, with vanities that are 30 inches tall and shallow, oval sinks to accommodate their short reach. The bathroom shower head is lowered.

"Everything else in the house is average-size because we entertain average-size friends," said Mrs. Baehm, who is 44.

Baehm said he travels extensively and usually is too tied up with business to involve himself with much outside activity, but lauds his wife, "who serves as my secretary and seamstress."

Baehm said, "She alters all our clothes, and she's quite a cook, especially baking fruit pies. She makes the crust herself—none of that store stuff. And you should taste her oven-baked bread. It's delicious."

Tops in tops

Using dressmaker's dummy, Carole fits pattern to figure.

Robert Rosamilio/Daily News

Carole Morris works on new design.

Carole learned from her mom 'to make a life of my own'

STYLING A BIG BUNCH of women's tops and blouses on short notice may be a tall order for most fashion designers, but pretty brown-haired Carole Morris of Elmhurst, who stands 4-feet-1, takes it in stride.

The 22-year-old, blue-eyed miss, a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan, is among the growing numbers of short-statured people in America who are quietly making their presence known in a world measured to big standards.

"At times I stand on a stool or a box at the worktable, but I find conditions generally very comfortable, and I love my job," said Carole, who is assistant designer for the Sweet Honey division of Cheri Alan Ltd., a women's wear house at 129 W. 29th St. in the garment district.

"I like to work with my hands, and even when the pace becomes hectic, it's so personally rewarding to see the end result of what you produce," she added.

Carole doesn't let her short size cramp her style. An avid roller skater and ice skater, she also enjoys bicycling in Central Park and swimming at a Y near her job or in the pool or surf near her parental home in Cranford, N. J.

"I like to walk because that helps keep me trim," Carole advised, "but I also like to cook and bake bread, and that can be my downfall because I'm dieting and I have to watch my weight."

Carole said she was born of normal-sized parents and that her two brothers and two sisters, all older than she, also are normal-sized.

"My father, a high school gym teacher, died when I was 2 years old, and my mother, a registered nurse, always impressed on me that I would have to make a life of my own," she said.

•

Carole has been a member of the Little People of America, a national organization of dwarfs and midgets, since she graduated from high school in Cranford in 1976.

"We regularly hold chapter meetings in New Jersey and there may be as many as 40 of us on hand, discussing mutual problems, sitting down to dinner and talking and just partying," she said.

Making her own clothes, Carole said, is a natural outgrowth of her interest in sewing and patternmaking, which she studied and developed in her teen years.

Carole said that, fortified with a resume and a recommendation from Harry Besserman, a professor at FIT, she landed her current job two years ago.

"I'd like to think I had good credentials," she said.

In her work, Carole said she concerns herself with style and proportion before the patternmaker works on the proper fit.

"I do quite a bit of sketching, and it can become a little sticky, especially when the firm wants 10 garments out by tomorrow," she said, "but I like to get into patternmaking. I like the styles."

Carole's boss, Wendy Landau, head designer for the firm, lauds Carole for her "marvelous personality" and job performance.

"Carole's a good, hard worker and she wants to get ahead," Landau said. "Her height presents no problem in her work relationships, and I should know, because I stand only about 5 feet myself."

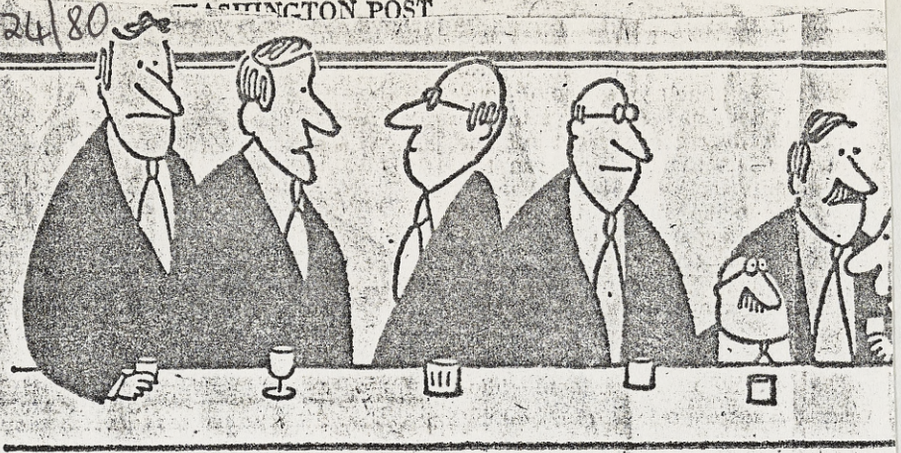
Carole said she subways to work daily and that her short height has its advantages in her travels.

"I usually can find room where taller people can't," she said.

--William Neugebauer

THE WASHINGTON POST 4/24/80 WASHINGTON POST

LOOKS: On the Short End Of It



"I wonder, sir, if you would indulge

By James T. Yenckel

Back in his high school years, Ralph Keyes fell for a girl who happened to be 3½ inches taller than he. Despite the height difference, the friendship blossomed until the night he took her to a school hop.

During the fast dances, Keyes recalls, "Everything was fine." The trouble came during the slow dances. While his classmates snuggled cheek-to-cheek, for Keyes and his date "it was cheek to chest."

That "was the ballgame" for that romance, says Keyes. "I couldn't handle it."

Being short can be frustrating, says Keyes, who has written a book about the effect height has on our lives. For one thing, talls and shorts see the world differently:

"Talls note whether we've dusted our refrigerator top; smalls know when we've spilled soup on our tie."

As a child, Keyes dreamed of growing to at least 6 feet 6 inches, but now at 35 he is fairly reconciled with his—to be precise—5-foot-7.62-inch frame.

Still, he "takes it as a compliment" when someone says he is taller than they expected.

Not everyone would consider Keyes (rhymes with eyes) short, though he doesn't reach the national average for men: 5 feet 9 inches. (For women, 5 feet 3.6.) Last year he was the keynote speaker at a University of Texas medical school symposium on the experience of being short. "In the first row," their arms folded "impassively," sat an "unimpressed line of dwarfs and midgets."

"Some of you might think it presumptuous of me to be here," he told the group, explaining, however, "I'm just short enough to sense that smaller people get treated differently."

For Keyes, who teaches writing at Temple University in Philadelphia, shortness is both "serious" and "absurd"—he did a piece on "Runt's Lib" for Playboy a few years ago.

Being short, for one thing, may cost you money on the job. Studies indicate, he says, that tall people on the average get paid more than short. This may be because tall people better fit the image of a corporate leader.

In what he calls the "angry" chapter of his book, "The Height of Your Life" (Little, Brown, 331 pages, $11.95), Keyes observes that "American games are geared to talls." A football or basketball player in the mid-6-foot range "doesn't have to be terribly talented . . . but players in the mid-5-foot range must be brilliant to succeed."

He recalls the time he tried to tackle a 6-footer in a school scrimmage. "I grabbed him around the leg, but he just kept dragging me for 20 more feet."

The growing popularity of soccer in schools, he suggests, may be because it doesn't favor either talls or shorts. "If such trends continue—if our historic preference for sports that favor talls is balanced by the rise of sports that favor smalls, or, better yet, favor no size in particular—people of all heights will come out winners."

Shorts also must put up with "hideous nicknames" in school: "runt," "pipsqueak" and "shrimp" among them. Something of the sort may continue the rest of their lives. Short men, says Keyes, get described in the media as "feisty." It's the talls who are "distinguished." Short women are "cute" or "perky," never "elegant."

Ralph Keyes (who stands 5' 7.62"): "Talls note whether we've dusted our refrigerator top; smalls know when we've spilled soup on our tie."

Photo by John McDonnell —The Washington Post

Big and Small in

The following, says author Ralph Keyes, are "people in the public eye who regularly fool it":

Smaller than you might imagine:

Marlon Brando
Charles Bronson
Johnny Carson
Geraldine Chaplin
Julie Christie
Robert Conrad
Walter Cronkite
Bette Davis
Robert De Niro
Kirk Douglas
Peter Falk
Jane Fonda
Buckminster Fuller
Steve Garvey
Patty Hearst
Katharine Hepburn
Reggie Jackson
Mick Jagger
Paul Newman
Jack Nicholson
Laurence Olivier
Burt Reynolds
Suzanne Somers

STYLE PLUS

Drawing by C. Barsotti © 1972; The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

ne in a rather unusual request?"

Only this week, Time magazine describes Al Neuharth, chairman of the Gannett newspaper chain, as a "wiry (5 ft. 7 in., 150 lbs.) imp." Imp or not, Neuharth, pulling down a $1 million-plus yearly income, proves talls don't get all the big bucks.

Keyes, whose wife is 5 feet 4, thinks a short person can do little more than "laugh" or "make a joke when someone takes a potshot at his or her size, though he doesn't consider it "a laughing matter." Otherwise, "you're a poor sport."

As for the absurd, Hollywood often has gone to extremes to conceal the heights of its stars. In "Casablanca's" final, tear-jerking airport scene, Keyes reports, Ingrid Bergman had to walk in a specially-dug trench to keep from towering over co-star Humphrey Bogart.

Once Alan Ladd, at about 5 feet 4, was mismatched in "Boy on a Dolphin" with a 4-inch-taller Sophia Loren. He stood on crates. Ladd is reported to have compared working with Loren—from where he stood—to "being bombarded with watermelons."

Keyes thinks Jimmy Carter, like many public figures, may be fudging on his reported height for political reasons, since, according to Keyes' research, the public generally attributes "leadership" qualities to tall people.

Keyes challenged the president (whom the White House press office says is 5 feet 10 inches) to stand barefoot back-to-back with him at the Lincoln Memorial at noon Tuesday to determine who is the tallest. Carter didn't show, and Keyes kept his shoes on.

When talking about height, says Keyes, "people are usually very generous to themselves. They fudge upwards, and that becomes their height forever more."

Our love affair with height begins, he believes, "when we are lying in a crib looking up at those literally towering bodies—with all that power."

It's reinforced in childhood, when parents or other adults enthuse over a child's growth and warn that they won't grow up if they don't eat all their spinich. And, he adds pointedly, "big kids could beat you up" or you're left out "when teams are chosen up."

Says Keyes, "It's hard to miss all the rewards given to taller bodies."

Initially, he wanted to grow tall, because "bigger people are intimidating. I wanted the respect that taller bodies get." But as he grew older, "I got less interested in being intimidating."

One of the "payoffs" of writing his book, he says, "is realizing the advantages of my size."

One study, he found, suggests that while men turn to tall people for leadership, they want a shorter man for a friend. "At this point, I'd rather have a friend."

Smalls tend to have less back problems, reports Keyes. They have better balance, making them less likely to slip and fall. They need less food—"In times of famine, taller bodies are the first to go."

In sports, smalls "have the advantage when endurance is rewarded," such as marathon racing.

They fit "comfortably into all kinds of cars"; they have "a neat and tidy quality."

And, adds Keyes, there's one more advantage. "As a kid, I could climb higher and further out on a branch."

the Public Eye

Sylvester Stallone
Ringo Starr
Elizbeth Taylor
Andy Warhol
Raquel Welch
Henry Winkler

Taller than you might imagine:

Warren Beatty
Ingrid Bergman
H. Rap Brown
Fidel Castro
Howard Cosell
Jules Feiffer
Bobby Fischer
David Frost
Jerry Lewis
Billy Martin
Richard Nixon
Gilda Radner
Ronald Reagan
Cybill Shepherd
Tom Snyder
Lowell Weicker

Either way:

James Caan
Farrah Fawcett
Joe Garagiola
Hugh Hefner

Humphrey Bogart (short) and Ingrid Bergman (tall).

From "Casablanca"

The Washington Post 6/30/80

The Little People

Standing Up for Short Stature

By Michael Kernan

When Stephanie Mason was 8 years old, her parents brought her down from Dayton, Ohio, to the annual symposium on short stature at Johns Hopkins. All ages, milling around and chatting. Her face lit up.

"Mom! Look! They're just like me!"

One American in 20,000 has achondroplasia, or dwarfism. It is a lonely thing. Nearly always, you are the only one in your high school or college. Paul Miller, a pre-law student at the University of Pennsylvania, is the only dwarf in 10,000 students. That is partly good—everyone in the place knows him—and partly bad—it is also lonely.

When Frank J. Lentini heard there was a young woman dwarf in Watertown, N.Y., he went over right away—an hour's drive from his native Auburn. He didn't know her name, even. But he asked around and soon found her, Emma Cronk, and called her up and later married her. (She died just last year, but there are two children, a girl, 25, a dwarf, and a son, 30, who is six feet tall.)

That's one of the great things about the short-stature symposium. The eighth one was held over the weekend in Baltimore. It began in 1972 as part of a plan to develop a national center for studying the medical problems of little people, but right away it turned into something else as well: a social occasion, a convention, a family reunion.

It doesn't take much imagination to figure out the problems and frustrations of being four feet tall. The furniture in your house, the chairs and tables, the kitchen counter, the cabinets, the window shades: Everything's out of reach. Go to an office building, and you can't reach the top buttons in the elevator. What about cars? In a crowd, say on the subway, you can literally get lost among all those midriffs.

See SYMPOSIUM, C3, Col. 1

Frank J. Lentini; by Zuhair Kareem, Johns Hopkins University

The attendees at the symposium on short stature; by Zuhair Kareem, Johns Hopkins University

Standing Up for the Little People

SYMPOSIUM, From C1

But these problems are the easy ones. Lentini bought a house, renovated it, but never bothered scaling things down.

"I just use a kick stool," he says. "I move it around where I need it. You get accustomed to those things. You've gotta have patience."

There are worse experiences for a short-statured person than having to ask someone to push an elevator button. Even though Lentini has lived in the same town all his life and has worked for many years at the local bottling plant, he finds that some people are still prejudiced.

"You're sitting down on the job and three different people come along and knock your hat off your head—the third time you feel like killing them. They see you're getting mad, and they say what's the matter, can't you take a joke?"

Voices from a teen-age workshop Saturday:

- "You meet people and they're shy, they're afraid they'll say something wrong, or use the word 'short' or something. So I crack a joke to break the tension."
- "I liked that song [Randy Newman's 'Short People']. I don't care what they say. They tease me, I don't mind. I can't help it." (The psychiatrist-moderator gently asks if that is really how he feels about it, and the boy's head bows and his face closes and he whispers, "I don't care.")
- "When you go to a shopping mall you're like the Pied Piper—you get a whole group of kids trailing after you trying to figure out what you are."
- "Friends? Basically, I have one kid I can trust. He's in the eighth grade, a year ahead of me, and we talk on the bus about what our day has been like. The seventh grade is a waste of time: we've been learning the same thing for the last three years."
- "My parents overprotect me. When I go out, they give me the Twenty Questions bit. My sister can go out and they don't say a thing, just: 'Have a nice time.' But me: 'Don't get hurt, be careful, who you going with, who's driving.' It's not offensive, just monotonous."
- "I'd rather have people dislike me for myself than pretend."
- "Some people just don't like me. I came out for some clubs at school and they just said, 'Get outta here.' "
- "My sister's here at the symposium but she went off somewhere. She doesn't want to be around."
- "Kids don't think you can do a sport, can't do this or that. You have to show 'em up. I was the number one weight-lifter on our team for three years in a row."
- "Yeah, I played baseball, got 32 walks in 14 games. When the other team hassles me, my team gets right behind me."

Dr. Victor A. McKusick, one of the world's authorities on genetic diseases, began concentrating on dwarfism in the '60s, has just been named honorary president of the Little People of America. In two decades, the field has more or less exploded—his catalogue of genetic diseases, a basic sourcebook, has had four printings since 1966 as several dozen forms of dwarfism have been detected.

"In the '50s, all these forms were lumped together as limb or trunk deformities," he says. "But there are all sorts of variations. Some forms are transmitted by the parents, others are recessive and so aren't automatically handed down."

About one case of achondroplasia in four has come from the parents, he notes. It used to be one in five, but more dwarf couples are having babies, it seems. (Childbirth is always by Caesarean section.)

"There are new treatments, lots of little things we can do for the infant with the enlarged head, orthopedic problems [at least two dozen of the 400-plus people at the symposium were recovering from leg surgery or walked on crutches], also we are dealing with middle-ear infections, which they are prone to."

Down the hall, in the big assembly room, short-statured people were talking up a storm, with parents and brothers and sisters joining in. One remembered the words of Beth Lawson, a district director of LPA who spoke to the group earlier. As an eldest child, she was accepted completely by her parents and two brothers, she said, was given great confidence and stability, was treated just the way the books say.

"But you know, I wish we'd talked more. I mean, they understood what my feelings were, and they acted on them when it was called for, made sure I wasn't left out of things. I just wish we'd talked about it. Sometimes you need to tell a child it's okay to be unhappy."

The Kansas City Times
Metropolitan
Friday, July 18, 1980

VICTIMS OF DWARFISM

Little People Are Normal People, Too

By SAL MANNA

As children they are taunted and teased, called runt, shrimp, or stumpy. As adults they are still pointed at and, even worse, looked upon as mentally deficient or freaks. They are faced with the prospect that getting a good education and then a good job are more difficult for them than average-sized people. They are victims of dwarfism. About 100,000 Americans are 4 feet, 10 inches or shorter because of it.

Until about 15 years ago virtually nothing was known medically about little people (which is what they prefer to be called rather than midget or dwarf). No one had even begun to discover the cause of the condition. They were anomalies and apparently incurable.

Little People's Convention

But when the 22nd annual convention of Little People of America meets this week at the Pacifica Hotel in Culver City, the talk will be of the progress being made almost daily.

"When I first started in the mid-'60s there was almost nothing being done with them," said Dr. David L. Rimoin of Harbor-UCLA General Hospital's genetics section. "As of today we've now isolated more than 80 separate causes of dwarfism.'"

While curing those causes is still a number of years away, Rimoin's research effort is promising. He has several hundred patients and receives more than 150 bone samples each year through an international referral system. Harbor UCLA is one of only 10 places in the world treating and investigating both the hormonal and skeletal versions of dwarfism. Little people with a hormonal imbalance are physically proportional. Those with the skeletal type are not, having for example an oversized head and short legs as with the late actor Michael Dunn.

The use of growth hormones for gland deficiencies is widely accepted and many expect it to virtually wipe out the prospect of adults who are little from this cause. Some in the field are so optimistic as to suggest that perhaps two decades from now newly born little people will be extremely rare—even in cases of bone inadequacy—thanks to improved neo-natal care, the non-hereditary nature of dwarfism and the increasing use of abortion. A breakthrough in Rimoin's research could also spell the difference.

Felix and Sue Silla first met Rimoin in 1966 at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Felix, who portrays Twiki the robot on television's "Buck Rogers" show and became a cult figure in the '60s through his role as Cousin Itt on "The Addams Family," stands 3 feet 10 inches and his wife Sue is 4 feet 6 inches.

"We knew it was too late for us," Felix said, "but by helping with his research we felt it might help others. It was the first time somebody was really

Please Turn to Page 4, Col. 1

CLEAR VIEW—Felix Silla has adjusted car to accommodate his height.
Times photo by Shelley Gazin

Continued from First Page

trying to do something for little people. We spent a week in the hospital and were poked so many times for blood samples we almost regretted it."

The Sillas' story is typical of many little people, especially those who are also parents. Neither came from families of particularly short people; Sue has a brother who is 5 feet 11 inches. As a child, each also developed an emotional resiliency toward their lack of height.

"My mother always told me that if being little was my only problem in life then I'd be just fine," recalled Sue. Felix was born in Italy and remembered being carried piggyback by his friends to school all the time. "Everywhere I went I could also ride the buses free," he said laughing. "My hometown was very small and very protective of me, as was my mother. I remember having to go to the doctor constantly and get shots. I have no idea what they were, this was in the early '40s. My mother always kept telling me to eat, eat or else I wouldn't grow."

Joined the Circus

After arriving in the United States in 1955 he joined the Ringling Brothers circus. For six years he was a clown, a bareback rider and just about everything else at one time or another. He then moved to Southern California and did public relations work for Santa Monica's now-extinct Pacific Ocean Park.

Soon afterward he began to appear in films and television—doubling for children, playing leprechauns or circus dwarves and now robots. In some ways his life has been easier than other little people because of his celebrity status. The first time he drove to his daughter Bonnie's kindergarten to pick her up after school he was idolized because he was then playing H. R. Pufnstuf on the popular children's show

"Because of my job I see lots of people and travel a great deal. I'm not bothered by people looking at me strangely," said the 42-year-old Silla. "Once you've been on stage and everyone's staring at you, it's much easier."

The Kansas City Times, 7/18/80

A Difficult Decision

What is difficult for many little people is the decision to have children. After a couple of miscarriages, Sue and Felix decided to adopt a child. "Adoption agencies always want to give little people children who are little too," Sue pointed out. "But we wanted a baby and it's hard to tell if someone that small is going to grow up to be a little person. When we got Bonnie she was 13 months old and was supposed to be small [illegible]

time. "He wants to be a fireman like every little boy and it's hard for him to realize that he can't be."

Felix, Sue and Michael are pituitary dwarves. The parents are considering putting the boy through growth hormone injections. It is not a simple decision. The shots are expensive and there is a waiting list to get them. It is also time-consuming and the results are not achieved overnight. Shots are usually taken three or four times a week over a span of five to seven years and it is recommended that they are started before puberty. Some patients are allergic to the hormone as well and for some it simply will not work.

In the end, the growth hormone can only increase height to a person's own growth potential as determined by heredity. "Michael's potential is the height his parents would have been if they did not have the disease of dwarfism," according to Rimoin.

Anxiety With Parenthood

Dr. James Brust, a psychiatrist who works closely with Rimoin and little people, has found that if given the choice little people would prefer having little children. "There's an understandable anxiety about not being able to control your children when they're bigger than you. They think, too, that the children will somehow be ashamed of their parents."

The Sillas said they will brave these rough seas if they occur. In fact, Sue gave birth to another child two months ago, Diana. They do not know yet if she will be a little person.

If she is, she can count on a strong community of little people as an adult. Little People of America, organized by actor Billy Barty in 1957, now boasts 10,000 members nationwide. Its convention this week will be the largest in history, some 800 participants. Included will be a symposium conducted by doctors of medicine and psychiatry from across the country on topics ranging from marriage and medical needs to siblings and assertiveness. Workshops on speech and hearing, the problems of parents with average-size children and employment also will be held.

Social activities are planned and are important for the emotional lives of young little people who find the usual world of dating a frustrating experience. For the first time, there also will be a children's program that emphasizes athletic training such as swimming and gymnastics.

"What really bothers me," said 4-foot 3-inch actor Tommy Madden, "is parents' reaction to their children when they see a little person. The children are innocent and naturally curious and when they see a little person they point or say something about 'Look at the little daddy.' The parents should explain to the children about little people and not slap them. But they don't know either. They think we're all from the circus, that we're all alike."

'Perfectly Normal'

Rimoin cringes when he hears such stories. "People should know that little people are perfectly normal in other parts of their body. They have normal longevity, normal intelligence. They can probably perform any job save that of being a professional basketball player. Just because someone has a problem in their pancreas or their feet, it doesn't affect the rest of them. It's the same with little people."

Brust agreed and noted that there are two classes of problems facing little people—the nitty-gritty and the emotional. There are the practical difficulties of living in a world modeled on people of a certain size. As a result, the little person can't step up onto a bus or reach the urinal in a men's room

Some of these everyday problems are being slowly alleviated because of greater awareness of the problems of the handicapped—particularly those in wheelchairs. Consequently, many states have instituted new laws to aid the disabled and some phone companies have assisted by lowering the height of pay telephones. Unknowingly, these new regulations have made life a little smoother for little people too.

The emotional difficulties are not so simply dispersed. Said Brust, "The potential for trouble is obvious. The first problem is acceptance into the family. For the most part, giving birth to a little person is a spontaneous occurrence, a first-time event. Parents have to learn to treat their child according to age, not size, they have to remember how old the child really is. There's a temptation to baby or coddle. But little people do not have brain disease or malfunctions in the nervous system: If they are treated normally they'll do just fine."

As adults, little people face the same prejudices that all minorities are met with. Sue commented that "little people are today where blacks were 20 years ago in society."

"None of this stuff about being a little person bothers my anymore, I guess it never really did in the first place," Felix said. "When it comes right down to the bottom line, it's not size that matters, it's what you do."

Los Angeles Times
VIEW
PART V
MONDAY, JULY 21, 1980

By Arthur S. Brisbane

Joy's wit fends off cruelties

Joy Wyler goes to work every day, just like everybody else. A medical technologist, she works in the lab at Children's Mercy Hospital, typing and matching blood.

She drives her car to and from a duplex in Lenexa. She cooks a lot and reads a lot. She takes her lunches in the hospital cafeteria.

Yet Joy Wyler has to deal with people who constantly stare at her because she is different. These are some of the encounters that punctuate her days:

Are you a midget?

"I ain't Santy Claus," says Joy, with the red, curly hair.

What's wrong with you?

"I took a shower and I shrank," says Joy, who is 25 and uses humor to ward off ignorant giants.

Is she grown (says a woman to Joy's friend standing next to her)?

"Yeah, I'm grown, and I'm deaf and dumb, too."

Dwarfs like Joy have a special window on the world. They see the prejudice of people and the ignorance. Like the rest of us, they develop defense mechanisms to protect themselves emotionally from these cruelties. But their defenses must be a little stronger. Joy uses her sense of humor and her sharp intelligence.

It's uncanny what happens when you talk to Joy at her job or in her home. At first, her tiny stature is distracting. She's only 3 feet, 6 inches tall. But as she relaxes on her couch or stands on her stool, you soon forget her height.

She regales you with stories. She unleashes her wit on a subject. It may be the folly she finds inside a hospital; it may be the way you wear your hair; it may be her mutt, Mojo.

But Joy Wyler is more than amusing. She is frank about what it's like to be a little person, and what the rest of the world looks like to her.

"I have an 'outside' person and an 'inside' person," she says. "On the outside, I'm aggressive, outgoing. People are more comfortable with me if I'm that way. If I joke about my size, they feel more comfortable. My outside person is tough. It has to be. "You can walk down the mall and be cool. . . . I cannot walk down the mall without kids going, 'Mom . . . Mom! . . . MOM!' And the mother goes, 'Shush, Barney, don't stare.' "

Joy's "inside person," as she describes it, is something quite different. It's closer to her real nature, perhaps the way she would be if she were of average height.

"My inside person is really quiet. I like to read and cook and be around the house. When I was going to move in with a friend, my mother warned her, 'She's not that much fun.' "

This split in Joy's nature goes beyond her personality. When at work at Children's Mercy Hospital, for example, she says she tries to maintain a serious, straightforward attitude. She has a bachelor's degree in medical technology, and her work is very important in the operation of the hospital.

Off the job, however, she's likely to do something offbeat. Three years ago, Joy was approached by Mike O'Neil, the drummer for a group called Colt 45 and the owner of Leprechaun Records.

"We're looking for a really tiny person to be a leprechaun," O'Neil told Joy. "We would like to work with you. We'll pay."

Joy was new in town. She needed money. So she agreed to be a part-time leprechaun to help publicize Leprechaun Records' new release, "Cosmopolitan Redskin," by blues singer and full-blooded Cherokee Tom Bark.

To get the attention of the media, Joy dressed up in a green satin suit and made the rounds of television, radio and newspaper offices in the company of "an incredibly beautiful Indian girl." Joy would bounce around like a leprechaun, acting impish and throwing "magic dust" on the heads of well-placed media personalites.

Other times, she traveled with Bark to performances. "I just mostly kind of sat around looking like a leprechaun," she remembers. "Sometimes I threw magic dust around. People seemed to get off on that."

It's been a while now since Joy played leprechaun, though she remains friends with Bark and Colt 45. These days Joy is trying to organize a local chapter of Little People of America, a national organization that helps little people. One of the main functions of Little People of America, says Joy, is to help the young adjust to a big world.

"You can be a doctor or a lawyer," says Joy, serious now about being small. "You don't have to run away with the circus."

VOL. II NO. VII JULY 1980 OAKLAND, CA

Oakland Police

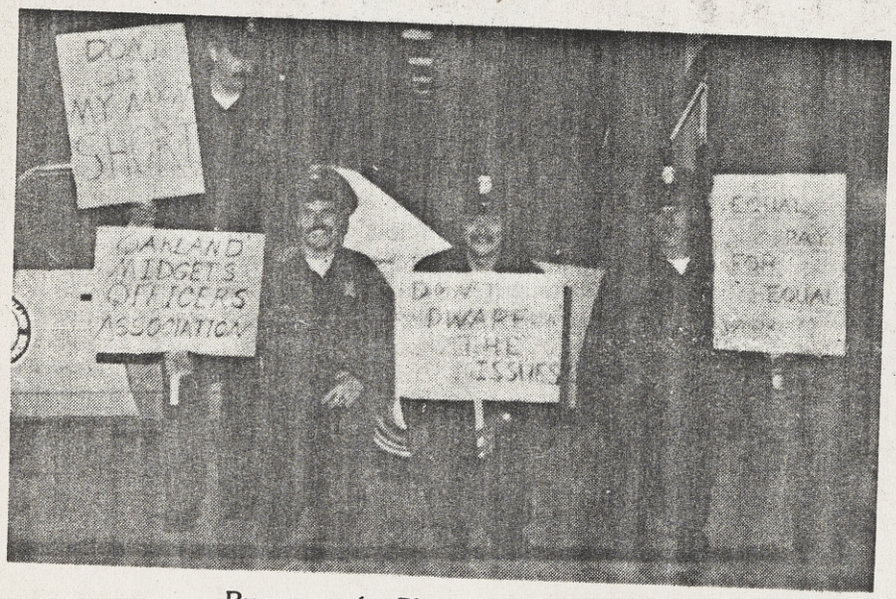
Midget Officers Assn.

Today the Oakland city council was presented with a petition signed by all three members of the recently formed Oakland Midget Police Officers Association (O.M.P.O.A.).

Arthur "Shorty" Garcia, attorney for the OMPOA, cited the following proposals on behalf of his clients:

1. Members of the OMPOA are to be exempted from lineup since the Lieutenants are unable to see their name tags and uniforms anyway.

Photo by M. Hanson



Runner-up for Photo of the Month.

2. Members of the OMPOA will be allowed to wear shorter long sleeve tunics and regulation pants.

3. Members of the OMPOA are to be issued patrol vehicles with longer pedals and shotguns with shorter stocks.

4. All rest rooms in the P.A.B. will have at least one facility and all public meeting rooms at least one chair for use by persons under 48" in height. Also lowering several call boxes throughout the city.

5. The OMPOA expects at least one promotion from the ranks of the OMPOA to Sgt. and Lt. and the present Sgt. Muzar and Lt. Sanna do not count as both are one and one half inch over the minimum requirements.

6. Finally, all jokes and cheap shots, such as, "Hey Shorty, stand up!, Oh, you are standing up, HA, HA, HA!" or, "Excuse me Chief . . ., oh, it's only you shorty . . ." and "This is my partner, I call him my "Throw Down Cop," will come to a complete halt.

The City Council responded positively, establishing a committee to study the proposals and report back to the Council by May of 1985.

The Oakland Midget Police Officer's Association was formed by former OPD helicopter pilots who've survived at least two successful jumps from a falling helicopter.

Mr. Garcia did point out on behalf of the OMPOA that they appreciate Chief Hart's expression of unity with their position when he recently decided to keep his "Tiny Tot" furniture in his office which he has been using for several years. ■

Short Recruit Whips Army Rule

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. (AP)—Fred Tabor, whose battle against the Army's minimum height rule began in a recruiting office, is back—but now the 4-foot-8 private is doing the recruiting.

He is helping regular recruiters for a month before going to Germany for his first permanent assignment as an aircraft engine mechanic.

Tabor, 19, began considering enlisting last spring.

"I thought maybe the Army might have something to offer me," he said. "When I really decided it was something I had to do was when they told me I couldn't."

He passed physical and mental tests, but the Army refused to waive its minimum height requirement of 5 feet. Tabor got help from his congressman and in August was told he could enlist.

"I thought it was a little bit of a victory for me," he said. "I was getting my chance to prove that I could do it just like anybody else. I was glad. I was a little shocked, too."

His welcome at basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., was predictable. "Man, does your mom know you're here?" Tabor recalled one sergeant asking him. But, he added, "I think I had as much fun with it as they did."

It was eight months before he got a complete set of hand-tailored uniforms.

Basic training presented other problems. "I had to stand on six sandbags to see out of my foxhole," said Tabor, who won a medal for marksmanship.

He said there were times he thought he would not finish basic training.

"They ran me ragged for the first two weeks to see if I could really take it. But, I never had a time when I wished I wasn't there. I worked so hard to get in I couldn't quit," he said.

Dwarf Rejected

As Police Applicant

"The hiring of police officers all across the country is becoming a joke, and the only people who can correct the situation are police officers."

Officer Chester Broderick, Chairman of the Boston Police Patrolman's Association (BPPA) was adament when discussing the recent attempt of Burton Gutterman, 27, a dwarf who is 4-foot-3, to be hired by the Boston Police Department.

"It was really an experience when we (Broderick and other BPPA members) were asked to take a walk over to the Police Academy and found Gutterman sitting on a chair with his feet dangling about a foot above the floor.

"The Police Department panicked. We advised the department and were interviewed by the press. I treated it as a joke, but the Police Department didn't. Gutterman was claiming his civil rights and insisted he would make a great undercover agent or detective,"

said Broderick.

Gutterman, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts, with a major in psychology, failed the Police Department medical exam and allegedly gave a false residency on his application. He said he is a Boston resident, but lives in suburban Brookline.

After 1½ years of unsuccessful job hunting, Gutterman resents being on welfare and considers himself completely qualified to work. He disagrees with the Governor's advice that he's better off on welfare than trying to get a job.

"I don't have a problem," Gutterman argues. "It's a problem with other people."

The negative response from the department prompted him to start filing complaints which generated a lot of publicity in the city. He applied for a vendor's license and resorted to selling pencils in front of the State House to dramatize his plight.

"There was no way he was going to perform the duties of a police officer," said Broderick. "He insisted he could work as a detective, but he could be spotted anytime. And what would we do, modify the police cruisers and wagons for him?

"I'm not sure what's happend with the suits he's

Dwarf Rejected Continued

allegedly filed, but I consider the incident finished," he said.

When Broderick, 45, who 5-foot-10, was hired by the department 23 years ago there was a requirement of 5-foot-8. Now there are no height restrictions and some females on the force are shorter than 4-foot-9.

"In practical police work, using two-person cars, 90 percent of our calls are service calls to homes and barrooms. Psychologically, two individuals who appear physically able to handle the situation can usually control it. If they appear incapable of handling the problem, they become targets.

"A lot of police officers have been hurt in Boston and other cities because they don't look like police officers. They look more like boy scouts," said Broderick.

According to Broderick, the biggest unit in the Boston Police Department is the medically incapacitated unit, the result of officers being placed on duty with fellow workers who are not qualified. And it is usually the qualified individuals who meets with the injury.

"Unfortunately, the police officers in this country do not have an organization that provides statistical information on injuries, some of them resulting in forced retirements," he said.

Broderick placed the blame on the public whom he says has allowed politicians to water down police qualifications to the point where it has become a joke. He accused politicians of destroying the Civil Service requirements (mental and physical) and entrance exams, and insisted the public must be made aware of what's happening to the Police Departments across the country.

'I hate to see what it'll look like 10 years from now," he predicted. The Police Department will be run by flower children and they'll be throwing roses at the criminals." ■

A SHORT POLICE STORY

When he was a small boy, Burton Gutterman wanted to be a policeman. Now that he is a small man, Gutterman, 25, still hopes to be a cop. "I want to do something useful, something to help people," says the 4-foot 3½-inch dwarf. But the Boston police department very badly wants him to find some other place to apply his talents. "Size is relevant," insists a Boston police official. "How would you like to see a lot of policemen his size standing along a parade route or guarding the Pope?"

Visions of pint-size patrolmen have bedeviled Boston police since Gutterman applied to the force two years ago. A University of Massachusetts graduate, Gutterman scored a 90 on the entrance exam—30 points over passing—and passed his marksmanship and physical tests. "I wouldn't be surprised if the police want me to be able to leap tall buildings at a single bound and run faster than a speeding bullet," he says.

But an unexpected hurdle looms in Gutterman's path to a badge. Boston police now say that Gutterman may have lied on his application when he wrote that he was a city resident and black. Police say he is white and registered his car in suburban Framingham. Gutterman says that he has lived in South Boston all his life but registers his car out of town where it is safer. He says his mother told him that his father, whom he never knew, was at least partially black. Whatever the outcome of the application dispute, the police seem determined to keep him off the force. The Boston cops already have had to accept a 5-foot-1 woman, and this, they admit, has caused no problems. "But where do you draw the line?" one senior official asks. For now, their answer seems to be over Gutterman's head.

High hopes: Is Gutterman big enough to guard the Pope?

UPI

THE SUN, Monday, August 18, 1980

MARYLAND

••• Section C

Boy's story of a woman's rare sacrifice sounds more like a miracle

Matt Seiden

I wish I could describe Danny Singer's smile. It is the smile of a kid who has broken more than 50 bones in 13 short years, without breaking his spirit. It is a smile which is remarkable because it is there at all. It is a smile that could break your heart.

I wish I could describe Phyllis Penton's tiny handshake—the handshake of a 36-year-old woman who is not quite 3 feet tall, but who has put herself through college, worked as a guidance counselor and who has, according to her doctor, twice "come as close to dying as anyone can come and still survive."

I wish I could describe the spirit of Debbie Oakes, who has given up most of the things a pretty 24-year-old usually wants out of life and devoted herself instead to caring for a crippled dwarf she literally stumbled across in college.

I wish I could describe these things. But who has the words to describe miracles?

It began with a call from Danny Singer.

"I think I may have a story for you," the 13-year-old said.

Then he told me about Phyllis Penton. He said Phyllis was in Baltimore Children's Hospital recovering from a series of unprecedented, pioneering operations which had arrested a traditionally deadly form of dwarfism and saved her life.

But Danny Singer was not calling to tell me about the incredible, touch-and-go operations, which were performed at Johns Hopkins by a miracle worker named Steven E. Kopits.

He was calling to tell me about Debbie.

"There aren't many people who put themselves out constantly for others," the 13-year-old began. He spoke with the vocabulary of an adult, in the high, soprano voice of a child. "For somebody to give up college, to give up four years of their life for somebody else, I think that's pretty remarkable."

For four years, Debbie has been caring for Phyllis, accompanying her from Indiana to Baltimore for her operations, sleeping in the next hospital bed, changing her braces, carrying her when she couldn't walk or sit, helping her climb on her tiny, child's tricycle when she was strong enough to pedal, and sitting up with her through the night when she could hardly breathe.

For all this, Debbie has never received any pay. She says she does it because she loves Phyllis, because she says Phyllis is a "queen of a lady," and because she says Phyllis has also helped her in many, less tangible ways.

Before she tripped over Phyllis's tricycle on the campus of a small Baptist college in Indiana, Debbie says she was a wild, rebellious girl, estranged from her family, and "pretty much doing anything I felt like doing, without thinking about how I might be hurting other people."

She says Phyllis's counseling and friendship have helped her grow up, make peace with her parents and find meaning in her own life. Now she says, "Phyllis and I are together for life. Wherever I go, she goes."

"No one can tell what the future may hold," the older woman cautions. She only comes up to her friend's knee, and she speaks in a high, child-like voice, but her attitude is almost maternal.

This was the wonderful, odd couple Danny Singer was calling to tell me about. The boy said he was worried because Phyllis and Debbie had run out of money and could no longer afford to pay for Debbie's room and board at the hospital. Dr. Kopits said Phyllis couldn't manage without Debbie's loving, round-the-clock care.

So little Danny Singer started thinking of ways to help, and pretty soon he came up with the idea of calling the newspaper. If Debbie and Phyllis could get a little publicity, the 13 year-old figured, readers might send enough money to help pay Debbie's bills. At very least, he thought, the hospital might be too embarrassed to kick Debbie out in the street.

I asked Danny how he had met Debbie and Phyllis.

He told me he met them in the hospital.

I asked him what he was doing in the hospital.

"I'm learning to walk again," he said.

Danny, it turns out, has a rare bone disease, called osteo genesis imperfecta ("Osteo," the child explains, "for bone; genesis, for genetic, and imperfecta, for imperfection, or disorder.")

In simple language, it means Danny is about as breakable as a china doll.

"I break bones constantly," he says. "I've broken over 50 bones in 13 years, which you might think was some kind of record, but in fact, Evel Kneivel has broken 346 bones. I read that in the Guiness Book of Records."

That's the way little Danny Singer talks. I could go on and on about this sweet, bright kid who has written 50 pages of a novel, and is determined to be a doctor, and has just had his legs "shish-kabobbed," to use his word for the steel rods, which may enable him to walk again for the first time in seven years.

But Danny says he doesn't want this story to be about him.

"Phyllis and Debbie are the ones who deserve the attention," he says, modestly, "and they're the ones who need the help."

As it turns out, Baltimore Children's Hospital has agreed to let Debbie stay on to care for Phyllis, without charge, for at least two more weeks. And Phyllis says she and Debbie can take care of themselves.

The tiny dwarf says she believes God is looking after her.

But little Danny Singer is not convinced.

"She's just being proud," the crippled 13-year-old says from his wheelchair. "She still needs all the help she can get."

Dwarf, 6, has undergone surgery 15 times to straighten twisted body

Matt Seiden

When little Matthew Doering was wheeled into the operating room for what was probably the 10th or 11th operation he had undergone in his six short years on earth, the boy decided to leave John Steven, his favorite teddy bear, behind.

"He's seen enough already," the boy said.

Indeed he had.

The teddy bear had been by Matthew's side when they corrected his cleft palate, when they reconstructed both of his hips, both of his knees and both his ankles; when they lengthened his heel cords and his calf muscles, corrected his club feet, removed the artificial hip plates, and mended a broken knee and a fractured jaw.

Matthew Doering has been anesthetized on the operating table 15 times since he underwent his first operation at the age of 6 months. He has spent more than one-third of his short life recuperating from surgery. A good deal of that time, Matthew has lived in a complete body cast, attending a regular parochial school, immobilized on a stretcher.

Matthew is a diastrophic dwarf, the victim of an extremely rare genetic disorder. Without treatment, diastrophic dwarfs grow to about 3 or 3½ feet tall, twisted like pretzels, with arms and legs that are sometimes literally on backwards and rendered useless by a progressive hardening of all the joints in the body. The cruel disorder is also characterized by club feet, cleft palates and deformed ears.

The brain, however, is unaffected. In Matthew's case, within the boy's small, tortured body there is a brain which one of his doctors characterized as "superbly intelligent, highly talented, artistically gifted—a cutting mind."

Not long ago, Matthew would have been doomed to the life of an almost totally incapacitated cripple. But now, thanks to the pioneering work of a little-known Hopkins doctor, Matthew's prognosis is a good deal brighter.

This is the way Matthew sees it, at 6.

"Well, the first thing about being a dwarf is you're not going to be a big person. But at least, you're not a sick person with a disease, and you can do just about everything except run fast or swim. If I run fast, I can fall and fracture my leg again."

Still recovering from his 15th operation, Matthew walks stiffly, but he stands straight, and manages to use his deformed hands to draw beautifully and write with perfect penmanship.

One thing the doctors haven't figured out is how to make a dwarf grow into a big person. At the age of 6, Matthew is the size of a normal 3-year-old, and he is not expected to grow to more than 3½ feet tall.

But almost everything else now seems within the realm of possibility. Matthew's doctor says the boy is the first diastrophic dwarf in the world to be systematically rebuilt from birth up.

Matthew's is a Humpty Dumpty story, with a new feature. Steven E. Kopits, a 43-year-old, Hungarian-born orthopedist is doing what all the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't do: He is putting Matthew together again.

Improvising as he goes along, defying the medical textbooks which describe Matthew's condition as hopeless and inoperable, Dr. Kopits is painstakingly reconstructing the boy's body, limb by limb, repeating some of the operations several times as the body grows along genetically predetermined patterns, canceling out the effects of previous surgical procedures.

When the child stops growing, the doctor hopes, the effect of the corrective operations will remain permanent, allowing Matthew to stand straight, walk without pain, and live a more normal life. The final results will not be known until Matthew is an adult. But now at least there is hope for the boy and others like him—little people with bright minds trapped in twisted bodies, people considered hopeless just a few years ago.

Charles E. Doering, Matthew's father, served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. He believes he may have been exposed to Agent Orange, the chemical defoliant which has recently been linked with genetic mutations in the children of other GIs. Matthew's doctors say the connection is extremely unlikely. But Mr. Doering—who named his Fells Point bar, John Steven, Ltd., after Matthew's teddy bear—is still curious about the possible connection.

In fact, this was originally going to be a column about the effects of Agent Orange. Then I visited Matthew and his dedicated parents, and saw what Dr. Kopits was doing for the boy. And then I saw "Elephant Man," a play at the Mechanic Theater about a Nineteenth Century doctor who rescues a grotesquely deformed man from a London freak show and discovers a gentle soul and a sharp, witty mind in a hideously misshapen body.

And I started thinking about how ironic it is that the miracle worker on the stage is getting all the applause, while the real, present-day miracle worker at Hopkins performs in virtual obscurity, short of funds, and without ovations.

Letters to the Editor

'Eyes Are Wet'

Sir: I'm standing next to my tool boxes waiting for the whistle to return to work. I've just finished reading reporter Matt Seiden's November 30 column on Matthew Doering.

My eyes are wet, there is a lump in my throat as I thank God for people like Dr. Steven E. Kopits, a man who can see beyond what others call impossible, for people like Matt Seiden who can feel things so deeply, and most of all for my four beautiful normal children. I came to work today taking them for granted.

E.Wm.Tierney.

Baltimore.

Class recalls dwarf's visit

Barbara Adams' class was visited by two dwarfs. Here's how the kids reacted:

Some dwarfs came to our class Their names were Mr. and Mrs Stickney. They were nice. They talked about The Little People of America. It was fun.

They showed us their car. It had extensions connected to the pedals and the end of the extension had a piece of metal so they could reach it.

We compared Dr. Krumbein to the dwarfs. Dr. Krumbein is 6 feet 8 inches tall.

Michael Minnick
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

This is my very first time to see a dwarf. They are very short. I should not be saying that because they are bigger than my friend and me. They have a motto, it is "Think Big."

They have little arms and legs, but the trunk of their body is big. Their names are Mr. and Mrs. Stickney. They are very nice.

Dena Bowen
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

On April 15, some special people came to Room 13. They belong to a club, "Little People of America." These people are called dwarfs. Some of the kids said they were midgets, but really they were dwarfs.

You see, a dwarf has the same size body as an average sized person, but they have small arms and legs. A dwarf's whole body is small. Their names are Mr. and Mrs. Stickney. Their heights are four feet two, and four feet, six inches.

John Palicki
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

Two dwarfs named Mr. and Mrs. Stickney came to Room 13 at Meadow Heights. Mr. Stickney's height is 4 feet 6 inches and Mrs. Stickney's height is 4 feet 2 inches.

I am taller than they are. They are not midgets, they are dwarfs. They have short legs and arms and a loud voice. Some dwarfs need extensions to drive. Their motto is "THINK BIG."

Some dwarfs have remodeled kitchens and the stoves are 30 inches off the ground. A few years ago it was hard for dwarfs to get a job but the e-z-est job for them to get is acting in movies, like in the "Wizzard of Oz" and the Munchkins.

Jean Rett

Mr. and Mrs. Stickney are mutation dwarfs.

Brian Bozich
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

Mr. and Mrs. Stickney are dwarfs. Dwarfs are regular people. Their legs are shorter than ours. But they are nothing to laugh at.

Some dwarfs have seeing-eye problems. Some dwarfs marry average size people. Mrs. Stickney taught school.

Dwarfs need extensions for their car. The extensions are used to extend the gas and brake pedals.

Some dwarfs need to sit on pillows for the car seat. Sometimes they have average size babies. Dwarfs don't walk till two years old.

Jennifer Wu
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

Two little dwarfs visited us. Their names are Mr. and Mrs. Stickney. They have a club called Little People of America. They are a achondroplasia kind of dwarf. They have two long extensions. One pushes the gas pedal and one pushes the brake inside the car Mr. Stickney is 4'6". Mrs. Stickney is 4'2". Mrs. Stickney stood straight.

Without bending her knees, she put her head on the ground. It was neat We saw their car. It was the same kind of car you have, but the gas and brake pedals were raised.

Ted Williams
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

Today Mr. and Mrs. Stickney came to our classroom. They told us that they are dis-proportionate. Also, they told us lots of other interesting things.One other thing they said is their height. Mr. Stickney is 4'6" and Mrs. Stickney is 4'2". Later we got to see their car and their dog.

Corey Cohen
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

Mr. and Mrs Stickney are dwarfs. They are 4'2" and 4'6". They belong to the Little People of America. They are real nice people. They have special attachments for the gas pedal and the brakes. But they have a regular car. It's a Datsun 610 hatchback.

Mrs. Stickney was a teacher and Mr. Stickney works for United Airlines.

Todd Armenio
Meadow Heights School
Grade 3

In Room 13 we had a visit from a couple of dwarfs. Their names are Mr. and Mrs. Stickney. When they stand they stand short. Their feet don't touch the ground. Mr. Stickney works for United Airlines.

They had their kitchen remodeled so that they could reach the cupboards. They were nice. They were 4'2" and 4'6".

They have gas and brake extensions so they can reach the pedals. They bolt on the extensions to drive.